UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.96/955
1 October 2001

Original: ENGLISH

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Fifty-second session

AGENDA

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2. Election of Officers

3. Adoption of the Agenda and other Organizational Matters

4. Presentation by the High Commissioner

5. Reports on the Work of the Standing Committee

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11. Adoption of the Report of the Fifty-second Session of the Executive Committee

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A/AC.96/956
26 September 2001

Original: ENGLISH

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
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Fifty-second session

REPORT OF THE TWENTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE (25 - 27 June 2001)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The meeting was opened by the Chairman of the Executive Committee, His Excellency, Ambassador Ali Khorram (Islamic Republic of Iran), who first welcomed Mexico as newly-elected member of the Executive Committee. He then informed the Committee of requests for observer status from Bulgaria, Estonia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Ghana, Romania, Senegal and Turkmenistan. In accordance with the decision taken by the Executive Committee at its fifty-first session on observer participation (A/AC.96/944, para 31(b)), the Standing Committee agreed to these requests. The Chairman welcomed observer delegations including non-governmental organization (NGO) delegations, notably those from the Americas and the Europe regions. He also noted with pleasure the presence in an observer capacity of Ms. Ulla-Maija Finskas, President of the World Food Programme Executive Board, and looked forward to the benefit of sharing experience on the functioning of WFP's and UNHCR's respective governing bodies.

2. Agenda item 4 on programme and funding was chaired by His Excellency, Ambassador Johan Molander (Sweden), Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE TWENTY-FIRST MEETING

3. The agenda for the meeting (EC/51/SC/CRP.11, Rev.1) was adopted.

III. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT REPORT OF THE TWENTIETH MEETING

4. The draft report of the Standing Committee's twentieth meeting held on 12-14 March 2001, was adopted (EC/51/SC/CRP.10).

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IV. DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER'S STATEMENT

5. The Chairman welcomed Ms. Mary Ann Wyrsch as new Deputy High Commissioner. In her opening remarks, she referred to the important review launched by the High Commissioner under Actions 1, 2 and 3 leading to a redefinition of UNHCR's core business and reprioritization of activities. While this was essential to ensure full effectiveness of the organization, it was also very painful in terms of reductions of activities, with inevitable repercussions on programmes and staff. As Deputy High Commissioner, her focus in the coming months would be on improving strategic planning and a range of management processes, including a comprehensive review of human resources systems.

V. INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

A. Update on the Global Consultations on International Protection

6. The Director of the Department of International Protection introduced the Update on Global Consultations on International Protection (EC/51/SC/CRP.12), commented briefly on the other two sub-items and announced UNHCR's intention to launch a concerted campaign to encourage more rigorous observance of the principle of *non-refoulement*. She noted that the Global Consultations had already made a positive contribution to promoting understanding of protection issues and a willingness amongst a broader group of players to cooperate better to tackle them. She drew attention to the list of follow-up actions that UNHCR had drawn up on the basis of the first third-track meeting on 8 and 9 March (EC/51/SC/CRP.12, Annex II). She reported that five regional meetings had been held (Pretoria, Ottawa, Macau, Budapest and San José), all of which had promoted approaches sensitive to situations on the ground and brought useful perspectives. In all tracks of the Consultations, UNHCR was making every effort to involve NGOs and refugees meaningfully. The Consultations would contribute to the development of an Agenda for Protection, which UNHCR would present to the Ministerial Meeting of States Parties to the 1951 Convention and/or 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees on 12 December 2001.

7. Regarding track two, she highlighted the useful contribution of the first expert roundtable in Lisbon (3-4 May 2001), which had focused on the Convention's exclusion and cessation clauses.[1] The next roundtable, to be held in Cambridge in July, would examine *non-refoulement* (Article 33) and UNHCR's supervisory responsibility under Article 35. The discussion on the rationale and suggestions for making implementation of the Convention and Protocol more effective should inform the Ministerial Meeting's reflection on the challenges of better implementation. At the same time, UNHCR was committed to distilling the insights generated under the second track into a set of UNHCR guidelines to complement the *Handbook on Criteria for the Determination of Refugees Status*.

8. Delegations were pleased with the progress of the Global Consultations to date and welcomed their focus on reaffirming the applicability and continued centrality of the 1951 Convention, as well as on strengthening the Convention-based asylum system. One delegation highlighted the useful

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[1] See EC/01/2Track/1

advances in the areas of registration, interception and maintaining the civilian character of asylum. Another said that the Global Consultations were setting down markers for positive agreement on a range of issues, and observed that the problem was not the Convention itself, but how it was being implemented. Many welcomed the "global" and participatory nature of the consultations and urged UNHCR to continue efforts to associate civil-society actors, NGOs and refugees themselves. One delegation referred to the holding of a Refugee Parliament at the French National Assembly as a positive example and also encouraged use of the electronic media to provide refugees more information and ensure greater participation. Another delegation urged that, throughout the discussions, the social, political and economic impact on developing host countries remain a central theme and that development assistance for both hosting countries and countries of asylum was essential. This delegation recalled the link between assistance and protection.

9. There was broad support for the Ministerial Meeting of State Parties under track one and its universal reaffirmation of the central place of the Convention in the international refugee protection regime, promotion of more effective implementation and of accessions to the refugee instruments. One delegation suggested that a revitalization of Article 35 should be the focus of the meeting, while another considered that the meeting should enable ministers to focus on how to improve governance and directions for the future. Another delegation cautioned, however, that it was unlikely that States Parties would precipitate the establishment of any new mechanism to improve governance. Many delegations urged that the preparatory process, including participation in the Swiss-chaired Advisory Group of States Parties, be open-ended, transparent and participatory, as a means to ensure both high-level participation and committed follow-up. Another suggested the creation of a tripartite (States, NGOs, UNHCR) working group to prepare the Agenda for Protection.

10. On the expert roundtable discussions under track two, one delegation emphasized that, while examining academic opinion was important, there was a need to focus on State practice, particularly in revising the *Handbook*. Many delegations observed that the regional meetings were providing a valuable opportunity for regional players to engage in a dialogue on concrete issues at regional level, and thus strengthened regional participation in the Consultations. Another delegation suggested that it was important to examine the need for harmonization or codification of State practice of third track issues, since these were considered as peripheral to or not covered by the Convention and Protocol. One delegation hoped that specific recommendations would be made to resolve existing problems. Another urged UNHCR to be more radical in its recommendations and expressed concern about the disjuncture of statements made by delegation within the consultations and in the European Union Council and in other fora.

11. Responding to requests for additional clarifications, the Director of International Protection explained that the Agenda for Protection would be presented in preliminary form to the Ministerial meeting, since the consultations would continue into 2002. It could consist of a compilation of the most significant requests for action - some immediate, some longer-term - coming out of the third track, and range from the feasibility of considering an additional protocol, flexible application of resettlement criteria in mass influx, to working with ExCom to develop a conclusion on registration as

proposed at the meeting held in March. UNHCR would explore some mechanism for it to be endorsed. On the suggestion to create a tripartite group to draft the Agenda for Protection, she noted that there was already extensive NGO participation in the third track. In response to another question, she clarified that the update on the second track was provided for information, and that UNHCR would update the ExCom on all aspects of the Consultations. On the question of the link between the second-track discussions and UNHCR's intention to revise its *Handbook*, the Director clarified that UNHCR wished to present guidelines to complement and update aspects of the *Handbook*, drawing on a balance of academic and expert opinion and state practice. Regarding the impact on refugee-hosting countries and the importance of development assistance and responsibility-sharing, the Director noted that the Cairo regional meeting in July would assess such impact and explore ways to facilitate the work of host countries. Follow-up discussions on burden and responsibility sharing would be held in September. Finally, the Director clarified that one of two third track meetings in 2002 would focus on women and children, to draw on a number of activities relating to women and children taking place in 2001.

B. UNHCR's Activities in the Field of Statelessness

12. The Deputy Director of the Department of International Protection introduced an overview of UNHCR's activities in the field of statelessness (EC/51/SC/CRP.13), drawing attention to the fact that activities had expanded over past years in the face of new needs and growing demands. Despite the positive impact of the accession campaign, only 53 and 23 States had so far become parties respectively to the 1954 Convention on relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. Current challenges in the area of statelessness included the disproportionate impact of statelessness issues on women and children and greater focus on activities in regions outside Europe. A recent evaluation of UNHCR's activities in this field had recommended an expansion of activities, but resources were a major constraint.

13. Delegations commended UNHCR for its activities in the field of statelessness and recognized that the problem was global in nature, requiring cooperation at global level to tackle it. Some expressed support for the recommendations contained in paragraph 26 of the conference room paper and suggested that they should be incorporated into the conclusions on protection to be presented to the Executive Committee at its next session. One delegation suggested that the proposed recommendations be reworded slightly to avoid any impression that men do not face problems in this field. The same delegation stressed the importance of ensuring that all children, regardless of their nationality, status or place or birth, are registered when born and that clear rules are in place to avoid statelessness. Another delegation expressed appreciation for the close cooperation between UNHCR and national authorities on this issue.

14. Concluding this sub-item, the Deputy Director confirmed that statelessness was a core activity of UNHCR, but lack of resources to comprehensively fulfil obligations was a key issue. She specified that technical and advisory services encompassed advice and assistance in drafting national laws; in promoting compatibility between the laws of neighbouring States and more globally; in drafting and negotiating treaties and

agreements; in reviewing national laws in anticipation of accession to international instruments; and expertise in the interpretation, implementation and administration of laws.

C. Resettlement

15. Under this sub-item, the Deputy Director of the Department of International Protection referred to the note on *New Directions for Resettlement Policy and Practice* (EC/51/SC/INF.2).

16. Many delegations welcomed UNHCR's reaffirmation that resettlement was an important tool of international protection and a core activity. A number of delegations pledged continued cooperation with the Office in this field and highlighted measures taken to expedite acceptance or introduce more flexible criteria. One delegation pointed to the close cooperation between governments, UNHCR and NGOs as one of the reasons for the success of resettlement efforts. Some expressed concern that UNHCR's financial constraints could diminish its ability to engage with resettlement countries as an active partner: without sufficient resources allocated to resettlement, UNHCR would be unable to fulfil this core mandate function.

17. Many delegations commended UNHCR's efforts to expand the number of new resettlement countries, now numbering eight. A number of delegations offered assistance to develop the capacity of new resettlement countries. Many delegations encouraged all resettlement countries to increase their resettlement capacity and new countries to join the ranks of resettlement countries.

18. In terms of resettlement policy, there was broad agreement that resettlement should not be used as a substitute for asylum nor to restrict the right to seek and enjoy asylum. Delegations also agreed with UNHCR that resettlement should not be used to manage migration flows. One delegation said that more consideration should be given to resettlement as a durable solution. Many viewed the more strategic utilization of resettlement suggested in UNHCR's Note to be a challenge. In this regard, one delegation pointed out that there needed to be strict priority-setting to address the needs of those with acute physical and legal protection issues, after which "strategic utilization" of resettlement could be explored. Another delegation suggested that States needed to provide close strategic linkages between support to local integration and voluntary repatriation, and use resettlement for those who could not benefit from other solutions. One delegation observed that complementary asylum and resettlement systems were the most effective way to strengthen refugee protection. It was also pointed out that targeted resettlement enhanced protection of at-risk refugees and a number of models and examples were cited, all involving close cooperation between UNHCR, States and NGOs.

19. Many delegations appreciated the Note's emphasis on responsibility-sharing and the need for governments to shoulder their share of the responsibility with refugee-hosting countries. Many delegations described resettlement as being critical to burden-sharing, as part of a comprehensive response to address the situation of countries overwhelmed by the large-scale arrival of refugees. One delegation welcomed the Note's recognition that countries of asylum were often financially and logistically ill-equipped to

support the arrival of large numbers of refugees. A number regretted that prevailing criteria for resettlement were overly restrictive and suggested the introduction of more flexible criteria for specific groups of refugees. One delegation argued that restrictive criteria resulted in lack of resettlement opportunities for refugees with medical problems, particularly HIV/AIDS, which placed a heavy burden on asylum countries already unable to meet the health needs of their own nationals. Instead of narrowing criteria, one delegation suggested that States should ensure that resettlement remained a flexible tool of protection, which could also be used to assist developing countries hosting large numbers of refugees. While insisting on the need for adequate safeguards, one delegation suggested that the humanitarian evacuation programme implemented in The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in 1999 might provide a model that could be replicated for expedited processing in case of a mass influx or rapid refugee movement.

20. Many delegations expressed support for the principles endorsed at the International Conference on the Reception and Integration of Resettled Refugees hosted by Sweden in April 2001. Several suggested that it might be useful to request ExCom to endorse these principles. One delegation suggested that ExCom should rather endorse a broader document, not relating exclusively to resettled refugees, and recommended broadening the terms of paragraph 28 (h) of the conference room paper. One delegation observed that the focus should now be on concrete implementation of the experiences and best practices highlighted during the conference. A workshop in Oslo on resettlement in November 2001, would provide some additional recommendations to the Global Consultations.

21. Several delegations expressed concern about the risk of fraud throughout the resettlement process insisting that it was essential to ensure transparency and integrity of the referral process. Some pledged support for UNHCR's efforts to pull together expertise to fight fraud and to develop a management and accountability framework that would ensure the credibility and integrity of UNHCR's operations. One delegation observed that the procedures employed for the identification of candidates for resettlement were weak and discriminatory, insisting that clear guidelines were needed to ensure transparency in the identification process and discourage fraudulent practices. Many other delegations urged that transparency in the resettlement process be preserved and strengthened. One delegation observed that, while the allegations of fraud were disturbing, they should not detract from continuing efforts to work in the best interests of the refugees.

22. One delegation suggested that resettlement be considered as a durable solution for unaccompanied minors, when it was deemed to be in the best interests of the child. Another delegation requested clarification of the criteria used to resettle children and the circumstances surrounding the alleged "deportation" of nationals of its country to a resettlement country that had reportedly led to two deaths.

23. The Deputy Director thanked delegations for their expressions of support and constructive contributions to the debate which were in line with the spirit of cooperation that had also been reflected in the annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement held the previous week. He agreed with delegations on the need to enhance oversight and ensure more reliable processes to strengthen the credibility and integrity of resettlement and

mentioned a number of measures taken by the Department in this regard. As to the alleged deportation of children under the guise of resettlement, the Deputy made clear that UNHCR's resettlement criteria had been followed and offered to share these with the delegation concerned and with other delegations who wished more information about UNHCR's resettlement criteria and activities. On funding, the Deputy Director shared the concerns about the impact of UNHCR's "downsizing" on resettlement operations and acknowledged that this could have a negative impact on some resettlement activities.

24. Responding to concerns raised over the allegations of fraud and bribery in the Kenya resettlement programme, the Deputy High Commissioner later gave an update on the investigations underway in Kenya. She reported that the results were expected by the end of the month and would be fully shared with ExCom in due course.

VI. HIGH COMMISSIONER'S STATEMENT

25. In a statement to the Standing Committee, the High Commissioner shared his views and concerns over the funding of UNHCR's programmes. While the annual programme and budget for the current year had been approved by the Executive Committee in October 2000, it was clear that adequate funding was not forthcoming to cover requirements. It was largely in response to this dilemma that he had undertaken Actions 1, 2 and 3, of which the results had been shared with the Committee. For his Office to be able to function effectively, a sounder, more predictable basis was needed and he counted on the assistance of the Committee to achieve this. The level of the proposed budget for 2002 was an absolute minimum. A new funding strategy had been proposed as Action 3. It comprised, among other elements, a proposed "normative " level for governmental contributions. He was aware of certain constraints facing donors in terms of their domestic procedures. He hoped nevertheless that they would be able to make "soft commitments" ahead of ExCom, which could then be formalized at the time of the Pledging Conference in December.

26. Responding to this statement, delegations expressed unanimous support for the review that had been undertaken by the High Commissioner, hailed as a "bold initiative". Many delegations also warmly welcomed the opportunity for a frank and open dialogue on these important issues.

27. There was widespread acknowledgement of the need for stable and predictable funding. Several delegations reacted positively to the call for "soft commitments" and confirmed that efforts were underway for this purpose. Several also referred to other options they were currently exploring such as bilateral agreements with UNHCR. The Swedish bilateral agreement with UNHCR provided a useful model. One delegation advocated joint pledging that could be based on jointly negotiated funding levels. Several delegations, however, expressed some reticence as to the proposal of any "fixed formulae" for governmental contributions, considering that this needed further reflection.

28. Some delegations, particularly major refugee-hosting countries, expressed concern over the cuts in programmes that resulted from Action 2, drawing attention to the fact that such cuts had increased the burden on host governments. One delegation said that UNHCR should be obliged to consult

with host governments when cutting assistance. Several delegations also asked how UNHCR planned to prioritize between and within "core" activities as well as "non-core" activities.

29. Some delegations called for improvements in the formulation of UNHCR's programmes and budgets, with more emphasis on results and impact, and strategic priorities defined at a global level. Others called for earlier and more meaningful consultations than had occurred this year, recalling how useful they had found the pilot strategic planning workshops that had taken place in Zambia and Thailand. One delegation requested that there should be two more pilot strategic planning missions early in 2002. This delegation, which considered that the bar had been set too low for 2002, also called for UNHCR to set a higher budget for 2003.

30. Responding to the many statements that had been made, the High Commissioner thanked the Committee for the useful and wide-ranging exchange that had taken place. He recalled the global nature of UNHCR's mandate, one that required active partnership with governments and with NGOs. He emphasized that, to undertake its work effectively, UNHCR needed to be present and to be endowed with a minimum level of resources. Without this minimum level - which only donors could provide - it could not respond credibly to the responsibilities which the international community had conferred on it.

VII. PROGRAMME AND FUNDING

A. Update on annual programme budget and funding projections for 2001

31. The Director of the Division of Communication and Information (DCI) introduced conference room paper EC/51/SC/CRP.15 providing a programme and funding review for 2001 and projections for 2002. He gave details of the situation at the end of 2000 and developments in the first half of 2001, including the outcome of Actions 1 and 2 which had involved a thorough review of priorities and reorientation of programmes. Despite the net reductions achieved and the early and substantial contributions received from some donors, the Office nevertheless currently faced a projected deficit of $ 43.5 million for the year 2001. With new needs linked to recent displacements in The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and in Kosovo (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), this deficit was likely to increase. The proposed programme budget for 2002 was currently set at $ 828.1 million. The Director of DCI insisted that a timely and realistic humanitarian financial envelope was essential to determine the shape and size of future programmes, to facilitate strategic planning and enhance credibility vis-à-vis all stakeholders.

32. In the ensuing discussion several delegations made reference to the draft decision issued as an addendum to document EC/51/SC/CRP.15. Proposed amendments were put forward to paragraphs 2, 5 and 7 of this draft text. The revised text (see Annex I A) was subsequently approved.

The Americas

33. Presenting an update of UNHCR's objectives and activities in the Americas, the Director of the Regional Bureau highlighted two overriding

challenges in the region: strengthening the regional protection framework and addressing the expanding phenomenon of generalized forced displacement due to the conflict in Colombia. To meet the first challenge, it was important to ensure that the value of refugee protection was recognized at transnational level through the Puebla Process and the Inter-American system. In the case of Colombia, UNHCR had adopted a two-track approach, providing protection and solutions for Colombian refugees and asylum-seekers as well as supporting national efforts in favour of IDPS in Colombia itself, in the context of the agreement signed between the Government and UNHCR in January 1999.

34. In the discussions that followed, one delegation acknowledged the need to improve the functioning of their refugee status determination system, but confirmed that asylum-seekers were given immediate protection and provided with access to basic needs, such as healthcare, education and employment. Another delegation described its efforts, as a new resettlement country, aimed at finding durable solutions for refugees of various nationalities.

35. Several delegations referred to the continued armed conflict in Colombia and the increasing violence within that country, noting that the peace process confronted numerous obstacles and highlighting the large number of internally displaced within the country. They expressed appreciation for UNHCR's efforts towards ensuring that IDP issues received the attention needed at national and international level and applauded its support in developing a legal framework for IDPs in Colombia, where they are provided with access to healthcare, education and land. They also commended UNHCR for its work with local authorities and for its Operational Plan for Colombia. They stressed the importance of UNHCR's presence at field level to coordinate amongst the various national and international agencies and to identify solutions to the IDP situation.

36. One delegation highlighted the usefulness of UNHCR's assessment missions to neighbouring countries and stressed the need for UNHCR to have a regular presence in border areas for monitoring and documentation of Colombians. This delegation welcomed UNHCR's continued support in emergency preparedness measures, and supported its contribution to tripartite mechanisms in the region.

37. An observer delegation speaking on behalf of NGOs called for increased public information campaigns and training for the various levels of agencies involved in the interception and the inspection of migrants and refugees in the region, as well as a need for further review of detention policies and conditions for asylum-seekers, especially women and children. They also highlighted the impacts of UNHCR's budget cuts in the region on NGO capacity to provide social assistance to individual cases, in some instances crippling their ability to pay the necessary fees for refugee documentation and naturalisation.

38. Another delegation expressed support for UNHCR's efforts to strengthen asylum in the Americas, mentioning the Puebla Process and recent accessions to the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol by Mexico and Trinidad and Tobago. The main challenge would now be to ensure that the accessions led to the effective implementation of these instruments. This delegation also welcomed the establishment of an additional field office in Venezuela.

39. In addressing a number of specific issues raised, the Director confirmed that UNHCR would continue to maintain a Regional Office in Argentina, due to the needs at regional level. She welcomed the recently adopted Immigration and Naturalization Service regulations, and looked forward to further progress in this area. In regard to the Caribbean, she observed that ways needed to be found to strengthen the existing pro-bono protection network, which would undoubtedly carry financial implications.

Europe

40. Introducing the review of UNHCR's operations in Europe, the Director of the Bureau for Europe recalled that the South-Eastern Europe Operation had been merged with the Europe Bureau since early June 2001. Referring to the worrying situation in The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), he gave details of UNHCR's activities in the region including actions taken under its emergency response capacity. He described UNHCR's action elsewhere in Europe in addressing displacements, including some of a protracted nature. He also evoked the broader challenges of developing high quality asylum systems throughout Europe.

41. Several delegations echoed the concern over the current situation FYROM. They commended UNHCR for its contingency planning and rapid response to the displacements and encouraged the Office to plan for all scenarios, committing their support for its action including the request for additional funds. The generosity of the population of Kosovo in hosting displaced from FYROM was noted with appreciation.

42. With respect to other developments in South-Eastern Europe, some delegations highlighted the importance of returns for the overall stability in the region, commending UNHCR for its role in protecting minorities. Delegations from the region shared information on post-Dayton returnee numbers as well as on political, judicial and reconstruction plans to facilitate further returns in the coming months. They urged that governments should speed up the implementation of return plans, warning the international community, in particular the donors, that a reduced political and financial engagement would be premature and mistaken. One delegation voiced concern that the continued scaling down of UNHCR's operations in South-Eastern Europe would hinder its critical role in promoting and facilitating minority return. Those choosing *not* to return, would also be in need of assistance to integrate locally.

43. Referring to the situation of refugees and internally displaced in and from Chechnya (Russian Federation), one delegation emphasized that all returns should be voluntary and thanked governmental and non-governmental organizations for the assistance they were providing, commending the inter-agency appeal. This delegation suggested that the main flow of humanitarian aid should go to Chechnya, where most of the needs were, as this would promote voluntary return; it should focus on temporary housing, food for the temporarily displaced and strengthening of the NGO/civil society. Other delegations expressed concern over the lack of proper investigation of alleged human rights abuses in Chechnya, and stressed that the current humanitarian situation inside Chechnya precluded repatriation. One delegation deplored the dire security conditions under which humanitarian workers were operating in Chechnya.

44. The 1996 CIS Conference was characterized by one delegation as a major event, even though some of its goals were still to be met. Another delegation reaffirmed its commitment to the process and readiness to participate in the activities outlined in the recent workplan, commending UNHCR, IOM and OSCE for their involvement in the follow-up to the Conference, and encouraging UNHCR to continue its coordinating functions, including in more specific sub-regional projects.

45. One delegation called for continued international humanitarian assistance in Azerbaijan as the presence of displaced persons influenced the country's reconstruction process. He urged the international community to step up its efforts to ensure conditions conducive for the return of the displaced persons. UNHCR must have plans ready should ongoing discussions over Nagorno-Karabakh pave the way for such a return.

46. Several delegations recognized UNHCR as a constructive partner in the European Union asylum harmonization process and called for its continued involvement and input both in the ongoing harmonization process and in the longer term. One delegation stressed UNHCR's important role in the dialogue between countries of asylum, origin and transit. Another recalled that the harmonized asylum system of the members of the European Union had an important "export value" and urged that standard setting at the lowest common denominator must be avoided. Another delegation urged European Union Governments to define their asylum policies in compliance with UNHCR's advice, and made particular reference to the upcoming EU Directive on the "refugee" definition. Several delegations encouraged UNHCR to promote asylum systems in Central, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe that would further integrate and expand the European asylum space. The Stability Pact was described as a useful framework for the development of asylum and migration policies in South-Eastern Europe.

47. Responding to a number of specific issues raised by delegations, the Director of the Bureau for Europe emphasized with respect to post-Dayton return, that UNHCR encouraged comprehensive approaches that involve dialogue among all countries concerned, urging for continuous advances in the return movement. Successful returns would also motivate others who had not yet made up their minds. Temporary local integration should be the solution for those not wishing to go back immediately. The latter was also being applied as a general policy approach to caseloads in the Northern Caucasus not willing or able to return in the near future. It derived from the objective of avoiding protracted assistance programmes - which were unsatisfactory both for the displaced and for UNHCR. The policy of temporary local integration was applicable in the case of Ingushetia (Russina Federation), as conditions were not yet conducive for return to Chechnya. As long as the security situation had not improved, increased involvement inside Chechnya would not be an option. UNHCR hoped that return would eventually be possible, but pending that, other temporary solutions must be found. Temporary local integration would not only be a relief measure; the dignity of the displaced must also be considered. UNHCR would also continue to play a catalytic role in engaging developmental actors.

48. As to the CIS Conference follow-up, emphasis was now on regional activities, such as the recent regional meeting on statelessness held in Kiev at the end of 2000, and the workshop on border management, hosted by Sweden

in May 2001. The upcoming coordination meeting between staff representatives of the lead agencies in Vienna would consolidate this approach, and be shared in due course with the Committee.

B. Global Report on Activities in 2000

49. The Director of DCI introduced the Global Report 2000 - the first to be based on the unified annual programme budget structure - drawing attention to new features of the Report. He brought three corrigenda to the attention of the Committee. He also called for suggestions for further improvements to the content and presentation of the Report.

50. Several delegations commended the quality of the Report welcoming the changes in structure and the inclusion of introductory chapters on policy priorities and donor profiles as well as the section on refugee-hosting countries.

51. At the same time, some delegations stressed the need to strengthen the Report's analytical and evaluative aspects. Proposals for improvements included: linking operational strategy to objectives, activities and impact, including performance indicators; improving the table of overall income and expenditures and providing self-critical analysis focusing on the effectiveness and impact of UNHCR's programmes. One delegation suggested that UNHCR should develop performance indicators in consultation with WFP, which works on the basis of result-oriented planning. Two delegations also reiterated their acceptance of the Global Report as fulfilling all their reporting requirements, instead of resource-intensive, individual reporting.

52. Responding to one delegation's inquiry, the Director of DCI confirmed that the figures used in the Global Report were those of the audited annual accounts. He also took note of the various improvements suggested and proposed contacting individual delegations in order to discuss these further.

C. Budget Consultations

53. The Director of DCI introduced conference room paper EC/51/SC/CRP.15/Rev.1, drawing attention to recent comments by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) attached to this paper, as well as a revised draft decision that took account of these comments.

54. Delegations expressed unanimous support for the need to maintain the unified budget structure which was already proving its usefulness in enhanced transparency and flexibility. In terms of general priorities, many delegations also expressed appreciation for the efforts to distinguish between "core" and "non-core" activities that had been undertaken under Action 1 initiated by the High Commissioner. Some nevertheless observed that there could still be a need to prioritize among "core" activities, and it was not yet clear how this would be done. Several delegations emphasized that programmes for the benefit of women and children must be included as "core" activities. On the subject of assistance to internally displaced persons, one delegation observed that this responsibility should be assumed by UNHCR wherever appropriate.

55. Many delegations cautioned that the proposed introduction of trust funds must not be allowed to erode the unified budget structure. It was essential that their use should follow strict criteria and remain within specific limits. While echoing this concern, some delegations pointed out that the proposals under discussion represented minor adjustments and were aimed at achieving greater flexibility.

56. Some delegations expressed the fear that formulating the budget in one particular currency may lead to a false perception of variations in activities carried out in different areas of the world and encouraged UNHCR to consider the possibility of a multi-currency budget, or of other possible means to address this concern.

57. In conclusion of this discussion, the Director of DCI provided information of a technical nature requested by some delegations. He reconfirmed that there could be no intention of departing from the unified budget structure. He also acknowledged that it would be necessary to establish clear operational guidelines and criteria to govern the use of the extra budgetary trust funds.

58. The Committee then approved the draft decision, as revised (see Annex I, B).

VIII. PROTECTION/PROGRAMME POLICY

A. Economic and social impact of refugee populations on host developing countries, as well as other countries

59. Presenting the conference room paper EC/51/SC/CRP.16 entitled *Economic and Social Impact of Massive Refugee Populations on Host Developing Countries, as well as other Countries*, the Director a.i. of the Division of Operational Support emphasized that because of its protection implications, this issue remained a core concern for UNHCR, and was being addressed by through catalytic and advocacy activities, underpinned by partnerships with developmental and local actors.

60. In the ensuing debate, many delegations voiced their concern that most host countries were not just developing, they were poor. These countries have experienced the impact of massive refugee populations in many ways, frequently for extended period of time. Some delegations representing host countries acknowledged that while refugee presence could generate a positive impact, this was often outweighed by the negative impact, and gave specific examples of the burden in economic, social, environmental, political and moral terms, as well as the risks to the security and reputation of the host country. One delegation urged that a proper impact assessment should be carried out and presented as a formal publication to the international community.

61. Some delegations observed that the issue of host country contributions was increasingly complex and could not always be measured in dollars and cents. They recalled the principle of international solidarity and burden-sharing, and the role of developed countries. The search for solutions required a comprehensive, integrated, co-ordinated and participatory approach which took into account the needs both of the country of origin and the

country of asylum. For instance, voluntary repatriation - which some host countries maintained as the best durable solution - should be prepared for by initial investments by the international community in development and capacity-building projects in the country of origin. One delegation also felt that developed countries should be more open to resettlement.

62. Many delegations expressed support for the various field-based partnership initiatives, and in particular, for the collaboration with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in Tanzania. It was felt that this should usefully serve as a model for other bilateral arrangements.

63. Several delegations also appreciated UNHCR's advocacy activities vis-à-vis the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) agencies, as well as its participation in the Common Country Assessment (CCA) process to address this issue. One delegation encouraged UNHCR to continue its dialogue at the local level with the UN Resident Coordinators, and to extend this dialogue to international financial institutions. One delegation observed, however, that putting this issue on the development agenda was primarily the responsibility of host governments, assisted by development actors, and not that of UNHCR.

64. A number of delegations welcomed the High Commissioner's call to empower refugees as agents of development. Some felt that the international community should look for further creative ideas to help host countries cope with the burden of massive refugee populations. One delegation was particularly concerned that socially-oriented initiatives of this kind would be affected by the budget cuts.

65. While supporting the empowerment idea, some delegations advised caution with regard to its implementation and possible repercussions. One delegation viewed the challenge as that of promoting self-reliance while discouraging further outflows. In this vein, another delegation recommended the study of his country's experience, in which giving refugees the right to work had led to self-reliance without affecting the agrarian rights of the local population.

66. Finally, several delegations expressed interest in the ongoing review by UNHCR of protracted refugee situations and the promotion of self-reliance and community development among refugees and host communities.

B. Refugee women

67. Introducing this sub-item, the Senior Coordinator for Refugee Women/Gender Equality drew attention to the contents of conference room paper EC/51/SC/CRP.17, notably the current efforts it described aimed at empowering refugee women. She described the budgetary reductions operated by UNHCR that also affected, both directly and indirectly, the implementation of gender policies developed by UNHCR. She also briefed the Standing Committee on the recent Dialogue with Refugee Women organized in partnership with the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, which had brought fifty refugee, displaced and returnee women to Geneva to discuss issues of concern to them.

68. Some delegations having participated in this Dialogue welcomed the opportunity to meet and consult with refugee women and asked for the process to be repeated. Several delegations also commented on the panel presentation during the Standing Committee at which five refugee women had made presentations. Such an event was a unique opportunity for donors, staff and delegations to learn more about the needs of refugee women from the refugees themselves. They referred to the strong call made by refugee women for their active involvement in planning and decision-making. Two delegations also stressed the demand made for individual documentation for all refugees including women.

69. Delegations expressed firm support for UNHCR's efforts to advance the rights of refugee women and promote gender equality, calling for assurances that they would rank as core activities and not be adversely affected by budget revisions. These delegations also emphasized the importance of UNHCR's presence in the field, noting that the Regional Advisors for Refugee Women/Gender Equality currently covered several countries. Some delegations welcomed the inclusion of a gender specialist in the emergency teams in Guinea and Sierra Leone, recommending that this should become standard practice.

70. A number of delegations observed with regret that while some progress had been made, much remained to be done to translate UNHCR's current policies on refugee women into practice. It was noted by several delegations that while budgetary reductions have a negative impact on the activities for women, many of those activities do not actually require financial allocations, and therefore should have been implemented regardless of the financial difficulties faced by UNHCR. They expressed particular concern over issues of sexual violence, drawing attention to the risks faced by women when collecting basic items such as water or firewood. Some delegations referred to the ten-year review of UNHCR's implementation of the policy and guidelines on refugee women being undertaken by the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children of which the results were eagerly awaited. Other delegations also encouraged UNHCR to continue activities to ensure that refugee women's voices were included in peace initiatives, pledging their support and assistance to this process. They drew attention to the essential role of women in community development, and commended UNHCR on Volume II of the *Good practices on gender equality mainstreaming: a practical guide to empowerment*. Several delegations expressed their support for active male involvement in activities that promote gender equality.

71. Some delegations also pointed out that promoting gender equality was part of the job of every staff member in UNHCR and required particular attention and commitment from Senior Management.

IX. COORDINATION

72. The Head, a.i. of Secretariat and Inter-Organization Service in introducing this agenda item, provided an update on current issues of coordination within the United Nations system, focusing on the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and arrangements for the humanitarian segment of ECOSOC. An information note (EC/51/SC.INF.3) made available to delegations prior to the meeting provided further information on these and other coordination. issues. The Special

Coordinator on Internal Displacement also provided some introductory comments on the work of the Senior Network on Internal Displacement. In particular, he emphasized that host authorities, in some cases, could be doing more to assist internally displaced populations. He also called for increased and sustained donor support, particularly in relation to lingering problems of displacement. The Standing Committee paid tribute to the work accomplished by the outgoing Special Coordinator.

73. Under this agenda item, the President of the WFP Executive Board, provided a brief introduction to the Bureau's structure, role and programme of work. She also drew attention to the governance project adopted by the Board last October, which was seeking to address many aspects of the functioning of the Board, ranging from practical arrangements for how the Board conducted its business to introducing results-based management in WFP.

74. In their comments, delegations highlighted the importance of discussing coordination issues within the Standing Committee. This has become more apparent following the outcome of Actions 1-3 initiated by the High Commissioner earlier in the year. Commenting further on the prioritization of the Office's activities, one delegation cautioned that engaging in partnerships should not be used as an excuse to disregard responsibilities. Queries were made as to progress achieved in reviewing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between UNHCR and WFP, as well as with regard to UNHCR'S role in situations of internal displacement. The observer delegation speaking on behalf of NGOs suggested that the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) should be more involved in situations of internal displacement. He also stated that the involvement of humanitarian agencies trying to assist displaced populations should not be conditional upon their access to these populations. UNHCR was asked to clarify its role with respect to the internally displaced in Afghanistan.

75. In response, the Head a.i.of Secretariat and Inter-organization Service stressed that partnerships should result in effective complementarity to fill gaps in humanitarian work. With regard to the MOU with WFP, she informed delegations that the review was focusing on its implementation and should hopefully be completed by the end of the year.

X. MANAGEMENT, FINANCE, OVERSIGHT AND HUMAN RESOURCES

A. UNHCR's inspection plan and activities

76. This item was introduced on behalf of the Inspector-General (currently on mission) by a Senior Inspection Officer, who referred to the activities as summarized in document EC/51/SC/CRP.18. She explained that the coming two months would be devoted to preparing a strategy and plan of action for the investigation function, to ensure that internal controls in all field offices were as effective as possible, and to strengthen partnership with other bodies within the United Nations system (notably the Office of Internal Oversight Services) and with member States.

77. One delegation noted with appreciation the distribution through UNHCR's Website of the summary reports of East Timor (Indonesia) and Guinea following the inquiries into the murder of UNHCR's staff. This delegation expressed the hope that this transparency would continue, and also looked forward to

receiving the final report on investigations currently underway in Kenya. Another delegation drew attention to the importance of maintaining a clear distinction between the inspection and evaluation functions.

B. UNHCR's evaluation plan and activities

78. The Head of the Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit introduced UNHCR's current evaluation plan and activities as set out in document EC/51/SC/CRP.19. He also drew attention to a draft evaluation policy paper and sets of guidelines for the management of evaluations and for self-evaluation that were nearing completion.

79. Several delegations commended UNHCR for the substantial improvements achieved in the management and strategic direction of its evaluation activities. One delegation recommended upgrading and increasing the resources devoted to the evaluation function to match those of inspection. This delegation also suggested that consideration might be given to creating evaluation officer posts in the field. The need for adequate resources notably in core staffing was echoed by another delegation which also mentioned the challenges of effective longer-term follow-up to the recommendations emerging from the evaluations. Some delegations welcomed the contacts on evaluation projects between UNHCR and governments, and acknowledged the need for close cooperation to ensure consistency of standards and avoid a duplication of effort. Specific suggestions on subjects of possible future evaluations were put forward by some delegations.

C. UNHCR's human resources management

80. Introducing this item, the Head a.i. of the Human Resources Service referred to the policy issues under review, as contained in document EC/51/SC/CRP.20. She then described the various measures currently underway in the context of the reduction of staff as well as an accelerated postings process designed to assign up to one quarter of Professional staff to new postings by mid-August. Time-limited programmes for targeted Early Retirement and Voluntary Separation were also being implemented to encourage some staff to separate from service in the period 2001/2002.

81. Several delegations expressed their interest in these latest developments, asking to continue to be kept informed and expressing their willingness to provide support as required. Some delegations stressed that the organization also needed a recruitment strategy, despite the downsizing, to ensure a new intake of needed skills. One delegation suggested that an independent evaluation should be made of the effects of the change to rank-in-post notably in a decentralized environment. Another delegation recalled that staff security must remain a priority. One delegation also recorded her interest in the appointment of female field security advisers. Several delegations expressed their concern over staff cuts, particularly those affecting local staff who remained the most vulnerable. One of these delegations also pointed out that reducing local staff could have political implications that went beyond issues of cost-effectiveness. Another delegation drew attention to the importance of taking account of family life when reviewing the rotation policy.

82. Concluding the discussion of this issue, the Deputy High Commissioner took note of the wide range of issues raised by delegations. She confirmed that the Working Group on Rotation would complete its work in the autumn, at which time the comprehensive review of human resource processes would be undertaken. She also referred interested delegations to various analyses relating to gender and geograpnical balance, contained in the "State of UNHCR's Staff" that had been issued late in 2000. Other detailed information, notably the results of the working groups, would be made available in due course.

XI. STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE UNHCR STAFF COUNCIL

83. In the course of the meeting, the Chairperson of UNHCR's Staff Council addressed the meeting, welcoming the inclusion of human resources management on the Standing Committee's agenda. He emphasized that staff morale was being severely tested by the slow pace with which inadequacies in the management of human resources were being addressed observing that ad hoc, emergency measures were now being implemented whereas a more strategic approach was called for. The issue of lack of accountability of managers was also raised, as well as the strains resulting from substantial post reductions linked to Action 2 and which mainly affected local staff in the field. The staff looked forward to a more meaningful dialogue with senior management, based on a fair and transparent application of existing rules and regulations.

XII. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

84. There being no further business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting.

DECISIONS
(as adopted at the 21st meeting of the Standing Committee,
25 - 27 June 2001)

A. DECISION ON OVERALL PROGRAMME AND FUNDING PROJECTIONS FOR 2001

The Standing Committee,

Recalling the Executive Committee's decision at its fifty-first session on administrative, financial and programme matters (A/AC.96/944, para. 26), as well as its discussions under item 3 (i) at the 20th meeting of the Standing Committee and at successive consultations on the budget;

Taking note of the letters of 4 April and 31 May 2001[2] from the High Commissioner to the Chairman of the Executive Committee concerning the three Actions initiated by the High Commissioner upon assuming his functions;

(a) *Reaffirms* its support for this initiative aimed at reviewing the priorities and funding mechanisms of the Office and its request to be informed by the High Commissioner of the outcomes of the review process;

(b) *Expresses appreciation* in this context of the High Commissioner's letters of 4 April 2001 and 31 May 2001 providing information on the results of his initiative;

(c) *Expresses its support for* the principles resulting from Action 1, defining UNHCR's core activities;

(d) Takes note of the outcome of Action 2 concerning adjustments to UNHCR's programmes in 2001, and approves the revised Annual Programme Budget of $ 782.1 million for 2001, giving a total 2001 revised budget of $ 852.9 million as at 30 May 2001, including Supplementary Programmes, Regular Budget and JPOs; and notes that projected initial needs for the 2002 budget amount to $ 828.1 million.

(e) *Urges* UNHCR to consult earlier and more fully with Governments on its programme and budget formulation.

(f) *Invites* governments to increase their levels of projected contributions for 2001 in order to fully meet these revised needs;

(g) *Acknowledges* with appreciation the burden shouldered by developing and least developed countries hosting refugees and recommends that further consultations be undertaken to quantify and reflect such burdens appropriately in UNHCR's documentation;

(h) *Encourages* governments to ensure that in formulating their national budgets sufficient resources are allocated as contributions to UNHCR to enable UNHCR to fulfil its mandate in 2002;

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[2] EC/51/SC/CRP.14/Add.2.

(i) *Takes note* of the High Commissioner's proposals on funding mechanisms as reflected in his letter of 4 April 2001, and requests that UNHCR convene appropriate consultations to discuss these issues further.

B. DECISION ON PROPOSALS FOR BUDGET STRUCTURE

The Standing Committee,

Referring to the proposals set out in document EC/51/SC/CRP.15/Rev.1 on the budget structure,

(a) *Takes note* of the comments provided by the ACABQ in their letter of 7 June 2001, contained in Annex I to the aforementioned document;

(b) *Takes note* in particular that the ACABQ will further review these proposals in September 2001, in the context of its consideration of UNHCR's proposed Annual Programme Budget for 2002;

(c) *Recalls* the ACABQ's earlier recommendation (A/AC.96/900/Add.3, para. 40) that the Executive Committee should provide policy guidelines to assist the High Commissioner when accepting additional supplementary activities; *notes* the relevance in this context of the guiding principles applicable to the resourcing of UNHCR's unified budget adopted by the Standing Committee at its 18th meeting (A/AC.96/939 Annex B); and *requests* that draft policy guidelines addressing all the criteria mentioned by the ACABQ be presented to the 22nd meeting of the Standing Committee;

(d) *Requests* UNHCR to prepare the Annual Programme Budget for 2002 within the unified budget format.

UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.96/957
2 October 2001

Original: ENGLISH

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Fifty-second session

REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its fifty-first session in October 2000, the Executive Committee adopted a decision on the programme of work of the Standing Committee in 2001 (A/AC.96/944, paragraph 29) in which it sets out the issues to be examined by the Standing Committee.

2. In accordance with Executive Committee Working Methods adopted at the forty-sixth session (A/AC.96/860, paragraph 32), the Standing Committee has held three meetings over the past year: in March, June and September 2001. A planning meeting of Executive Committee members in December 2000 established the calendar of meetings and determined the distribution of the different agenda items in 2001 (see Annex I). Members of the Executive Committee, in acknowledgment of the need for multi-year planning, also took note of the programme of work of the Standing Committee for the years 2002 and 2003 (Annex I).

3. A detailed account of the work undertaken at each of the meetings of the Standing Committee over the past year is contained in the following reports: *Report of the Twentieth Meeting of the Standing Committee* (A/AC.96/945); *Report of the Twenty-first Meeting of the Standing Committee* (A/AC.96/956); and *Report of the Twenty-Second Meeting of the Standing Committee* (A/AC.96/958).

II. ISSUES COVERED BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE IN 2001

4. The work undertaken by the Standing Committee included a number of recurrent items. These concerned reviews of UNHCR's programmes and activities in various regions on the basis of oral updates, designed to allow the Standing Committee to oversee the strategy and evolution of these programmes and the essential challenges for the future. Africa and Central Asia, South-West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific were reviewed in March; and the Americas, Europe, including South-Eastern Europe, in June.

5. At each meeting, the Standing Committee considered regular updates on overall programme and funding issues, through which it was kept informed of the situation in terms of programme requirements and funding levels. In June, the Standing Committee considered the Global Report on UNHCR's activities in 2000. In September a Mid-Year Progress Report was presented on UNHCR's activities in the first half of 2001.

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6. Programme/protection policy issues were reviewed by the Standing Committee at all of its meetings. In March, it noted measures taken under the Plan of Action for emergency preparedness and response drawn up in 2000, and action taken to reinforce and strengthen staff safety and security, as well as refugee security. Other topics covered at this meeting included a progress report on reintegration; presentation of a community development approach to refugee situations; and a discussion on the need for a global approach to the problem of HIV/Aids which was a particular threat to refugees. At its June meeting, the Standing Committee considered the economic and social impact of refugee populations on host developing countries, as well as other countries, and also issues concerning refugee women. In September, the Standing Committee was briefed on UNHCR's contingency plan for a potentially huge exodus of Afghans to neighbouring countries (under "Any other business").

7. The June meeting of the Standing Committee focused particularly on questions of international protection. An update on the Global Consultations on International Protection was discussed at this meeting, and UNHCR's activities in the field of statelessness and issues concerning resettlement were also considered.

8. At each meeting during the year, the Standing Committee received an oral briefing on coordination issues within the United Nations system that focused on UNHCR's participation in the various coordinating mechanisms and its perspective on major issues under discussion.

9. In June, issues of management, finance, oversight and human resources reviewed by the Standing Committee covered UNHCR's inspection and evaluation plans and activities, as well as - for the first time - human resources management. The September meeting undertook a preliminary review of financial and budgetary documentation being submitted to the fifty-first session of the Executive Committee.

10. At its March session, under governance issues, the Standing Committee discussed the question of the selection of an annual theme for the fifty-second session of the Executive Committee. 2001 being the first year of the mandate of the newly-elected High Commissioner, it was considered useful to replace the traditional annual theme with a debate based on the High Commissioner's perspective on the work of his Office. The Standing Committee also recalled the changes to the Executive Committee's annual session introduced in 2000, and discussed suggestions for further enhancements to the format for the fifty-second session in 2001.

11. In accordance with what has now become standard practice for the Committee, informal consultations took place in the course of the year on issues requiring in-depth discussion. These included: UNHCR's budget; the evaluation function; security issues; human resources; HIV/Aids; and decentralization.

III. STANDING COMMITTEE DECISIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

12. In accordance with the authority vested in it by the Executive Committee, the Standing Committee adopted a number of decisions and conclusions on matters included in its programme of work. The texts of these decisions are annexed to the reports of the different Standing Committee meetings, as follows:

Report of the Twentieth Meeting of the Standing Committee (A/AC.96/945)

- Decision on Programme and Funding
- Conclusion on Reinforcing a Community Development Approach

Report of the Twenty-first Meeting of the Standing Committee (A/AC.96/956)

- Decision on overall programme and funding projections for 2001
- Decision on proposals for budget structure

Plenary decisions: preparation of drafts by the Standing Committee

13. The following draft conclusions and decisions were prepared by members of the Committee, in a series of informal consultations under the chairmanship of the Rapporteur, for endorsement by the Executive Committee in the report of its fifty-second session:

- Conclusion on international protection, including sub-sections on statelessness and resettlement
- Conclusion on registration
- Conclusion on follow-up to the 1996 Geneva Conference on the problems of refugees, displaced persons, migration and asylum issues
- Decision on administrative, financial and programme matters
- Decision on draft guidelines on supplementary activities
- Decision on the programme of work of the Standing Committee in 2002
- Decision on the provisional agenda of the fifty-third session
- Decision on observer participation in 2001-2002

CALENDAR*

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE STANDING COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME
AND SCHEDULE FOR GLOBAL
CONSULTATIONS ON INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION IN **2001**

12 March 2001

	20th Meeting **12-14 March**	**21st Meeting** **25-27 June**	**22nd Meeting** **26 September**
PROGRAMME AND FUNDING	• Overall programme and funding in 2000 and projections for 2001; oral strategic presentation on: Africa, Asia and the Pacific and CASWANAME	• Update on Annual Programme Budget and funding; oral strategic presentation on: the Americas and Europe, including South-Eastern Europe • Global Report • Budget consultations	• Annual Programme Budget, including the Report of the ACABQ • Update on funding • Mid-Year Progress Report
INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION"		• Update on Global Consultations, including: - Article 1 F of the 1951 Convention (exclusion clauses); - Refugee women; and - Refugee children • Report on UNHCR's activities in the field of statelessness • Resettlement (Information Note)	
PROTECTION/PROGRAMME POLICY	• Follow-up to annual theme • Progress report on UNHCR's emergency preparedness and response capacity • Reintegration: progress report • Community Services • Refugees and HIV/Aids • Safety and security issues	• Economic and social impact of massive refugee populations on host developing countries, as well as other countries • Refugee women	

* As adopted at the 20'" meeting of the Standing Committee on 12 March 2001.

	20th Meeting 12-14 March	21st Meeting 25-27 June	22nd Meeting 26 September
COORDINATION	• Oral update on coordination issues: ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment; IASC/ECHA/ACC, including the OCHA commissioned study on coordination and follow-up to the Brahimi Report	• Oral update on coordination issues: ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment; IASC/ECHA/ACC and briefing on the activities of the Senior Network on Internal Displacement	• Oral update on coordination issues: ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment; IASC/ECHA/ACC
GOVERNANCE	• Selection of annual theme for the fifty-second session of the Executive Committee	• Selection of annual theme for the fifty-second session of the Executive Committee	
MANAGEMENT, FINANCE, OVERSIGHT AND HUMAN RESOURCES		• UNHCR's inspection plan and activities • UNHCR's evaluation plan and activities • UNHCR's human resources management	• Voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner: Accounts for the year 2000 • Follow-up to the Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds Administered by UNHCR for the period ended December 1999 • Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds Administered by UNHCR for the period ended December 2000 • Measures Taken or Proposed in Response to the Recommendations in the Report of the Board of Auditors

Fifty-second session of the Executive Committee
1 -5 October 2001

	First meeting: 8-9 March	Second meeting: 28-29 June	Third meeting: 27-28 September
GLOBAL CONSULTATIONS	• Protection of refugees in mass influx situations	• Protection of refugees in the context of individual asylum systems	• Protection of refugees in the context of individual asylum systems (continued)

CALENDAR*

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE STANDING COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME
AND TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR GLOBAL
CONSULTATIONS ON INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION IN 2002

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13 December 2000

	23rd Meeting February/March	24th Meeting June/July	25th Meeting September/October
PROGRAMME AND FUNDING	• Overall programme and funding in 2001 and projections for 2002; oral strategic presentation on: Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and CASWANAME	• Update on Annual Programme Budget and funding; oral strategic presentation on: the Americas and Europe, including South-Eastern Europe • Global Report	• Annual Programme Budget, including the Report of the ACABQ • Update on funding • Mid-Year Progress Report
INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION		• Note on International Protection • Two protection-specific items, including internally displaced persons	
PROTECTION/PROGRAMME POLICY	• Follow-up to annual theme** • Refugee children • Older refugees • Refugees and environmental issues • Safety and security issues	• Economic and social impact of massive refugee populations on host developing countries, as well as other countries	
COORDINATION	• Update on coordination issues: ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment; IASC/ECHA/ACC (oral report)	• Update on coordination issues: ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment; IASC/ECHA/ACC (oral report)	• Update on coordination issues: ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment; IASC/ECHA/ACC (oral report)
GOVERNANCE	• Selection of Annual Theme for the fifty-third Session of the Executive Committee	• Selection of Annual Theme for the fifty-third Session of the Executive Committee	

* Noted at the Planning Meeting of the Standing Committee on 13 December 2000.
** Annual theme replaced at fifty-second Session by debate on High Commissioner's statement.

	23rd Meeting February/March	24th Meeting June/July	25th Meeting September/October
MANAGEMENT, FINANCE, OVERSIGHT AND HUMAN RESOURCES		• UNHCR's inspection plan and activities • UNHCR's evaluation plan and activities	• Voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner: Accounts for the year 2001 • Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds Administered by UNHCR for the period ended December 2000 • Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds Administered by UNHCR for the period ended December 2001 • Measures Taken or Proposed in Response to the Recommendations in the Report of the Board of Auditors

Fifty-third session of the Executive Committee
October 2002

	Fourth meeting: February/March***
GLOBAL CONSULTATIONS	• The search for protection-based solutions

***Two additional meetings are foreseen in 2002.

CALENDAR*

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE STANDING
COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2003

DRAFT

13 December 2000

	26th Meeting February/March	27th Meeting June/July	28th Meeting September/October
PROGRAMME AND FUNDING	• Overall programme and funding in 2002 and projections for 2003; oral strategic presentation on: Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and CASWANAME	• Update on Annual Programme Budget and funding; oral strategic presentation on: the Americas and Europe, including South-Eastern Europe • Global Report	• Annual Programme Budget, including the Report of the ACABQ • Update on funding • Mid-Year Progress Report
INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION		• Note on International Protection • Two protection-specific items to be decided upon	
PROTECTION/PROGRAMME POLICY	• Follow-up to annual theme • Refugee women • Economic and social impact of massive refugee populations on host developing countries, as well as other countries • Safety and security issues		
COORDINATION	• Update on coordination issues: ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment; IASC/ECHA/ACC (oral report)	• Update on coordination issues: ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment; IASC/ECHA/ACC (oral report)	• Update on coordination issues: ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment; IASC/ECHA/ACC (oral report)
GOVERNANCE	• Selection of Annual Theme for the fifty-fourth Session of the Executive Committee	• Selection of Annual Theme for the fifty-fourth Session of the Executive Committee	

*Noted at the Planning Meeting of the Standing Committee on 13 December 2000.

	26th Meeting February/March	27th Meeting June/July	28th Meeting September/October
MANAGEMENT, FINANCE, OVERSIGHT AND HUMAN RESOURCES		• UNHCR inspection plan and activities • UNHCR evaluation plan and activities	• Voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner: Accounts for the year 2001 • Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds Administered by UNHCR for the period ended December 2001 • Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds Administered by UNHCR for the period ended December 2002 • Measures Taken or Proposed in Response to the Recommendations in the Report of the Board of Auditors

Fifty-fourth session of the Executive Committee
OCTOBER 2003

STANDING COMMITTEE DOCUMENTATION ISSUED DURING 2000

20th Meeting (12-14 March 2001)

EC/51/SC/CRP.1	Provisional Annotated Agenda
EC/51/SC/CRP.2	Standing Committee Work Programme for 2001
EC/51/SC/CRP.3	Format of the Executive Committee - Proposals for the Fifty-second Session
EC/51/SC/CRP.4	Emergency Preparedness and Response
EC/51/SC/CRP.5	Reintegration: a progress report
EC/51/SC/CRP.6	Reinforcing a community approach
EC/51/SC/CRP.7	Refugees and HIV/AIDS
EC/51/SC/CRP.8	Safety and Security Issues
EC/51/SC/CRP.9	Overall Programme and Funding in 2000 and Projections for 2001
EC/51/SC/INF.1	Update on Coordination issues within the United Nations system

21st Meeting (25-27 June 2001)

EC/51/SC/CRP.10	Draft Report of the Twentieth Meeting of the Standing Committee
EC/51/SC/CRP.11/ Rev.1	Provisional Annotated Agenda
EC/51/SC/CRP.12	Update on Global Consultations on International Protection
EC/51/SC/CRP.13	UNHCR's Activities in the Field of Statelessness: progress report
EC/51/SC/CRP.14 and Add.1	Overall Programme and Funding Projections for 2001
EC/51/SC/CRP.15/ Rev.1	Proposals for Budget Structure
EC/51/SC/CRP.16	Economic and Social Impact of Massive Refugee Populations on Host Developing Countries, as well as Other Countries
EC/51/SC/CRP.17	Refugee Women and Mainstreaming a Gender Equality Perspective

EC/51/SC/CRP.18	UNHCR's Inspection Plan and Activities
EC/51/SC/CRP.19	UNHCR's Evaluation Plan and Activities
EC/51/SC/CRP.20	UNHCR's Human Resources Management
EC/51/SC/INF.2	New Directions for Resettlement Policy and Practice
EC/51/SC/INF.3	Update on Coordination Issues

22nd meeting (26 September)

EC/51/SC/CRP.21	Draft Report of the Twenty-first Meeting of the Standing Committee
EC/51/SC/CRP.22	Provisional Annotated Agenda
EC/51/SC/CRP.23	Update on Programme and Funding for 2001
EC/51/SC/INF.4	Update on Coordination Issues

UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.96/958
3 October 2001

Original: ENGLISH

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Fifty-second session

REPORT OF THE TWENTY-SECOND MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
(26 September 2001)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The meeting was opened by the Chairman of the Executive Committee, His Excellency, Ambassador Ali Khorram (Islamic Republic of Iran), who informed the Committee that requests for observer status had been received from the Governments of the Czech Republic, Djibouti, Gabon, Monaco and the Republic of Moldova. In accordance with the decision taken by the Executive Committee at its fifty-first session on observer participation (A/AC.96/944, para.31(b)), the Standing Committee agreed to these requests. The Chairman then asked for a minute of silence in memory of those who lost their lives in the tragic incidents which took place in the United States on 11 September. The Chairman next recalled the brutal murders of four UNHCR staff members in Indonesia and Guinea one year previously. The Secretary invited delegations to participate in a remembrance for these colleagues, for which arrangements had been made by UNHCR's management and the Staff Council.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA OF THE TWENTY-SECOND MEETING

2. The Chairman announced that an update on UNHCR's contingency plans within the context of the Afghanistan emergency, as well as a proposal he had received concerning seating of the European Commission would be presented under any other business (agenda item 6).

3. The agenda for the meeting (EC/51/SC/CRP.22) was adopted.

III. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT REPORT OF THE TWENTY-FIRST MEETING

4. The Chairman presented for adoption the draft report of the Standing Committee's twenty-first meeting held on 25-27 June 2001 (EC/51/SC/CRP.21). One delegation proposed amendments to paras. 55, 66 and 69. Another delegation sought clarification as to the process of drafting the reports of the Standing Committee. The Secretary described the process in some detail. The draft report was adopted with these amendments.

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IV. PROGRAMME AND FUNDING

A. Update on programme and funding

5. Introducing the latest update on programme and funding projections for 2001 (EC/51/SC/CRP.23), the Director of the Division of Communication and Information (DCI) focused on developments in the first three quarters of 2001, challenges for the remaining quarter of the year and funding the 2002 budget. He expressed gratitude for the continued commitment of donors and host governments. Within the framework of Actions 1, 2 and 3, UNHCR had sought to strengthen the strategic position and management of resources in order to maintain financial health and stability. This had included developing a closer dialogue with stakeholders in defining strategies, priorities and planning in an effort to broaden the donor base and renew synergy in partnerships.

6. He acknowledged that early and substantial pledges and broader earmarking of funds on the part of some donors had permitted programme implementation to continue without interruption for the first nine months of the year. However, he drew attention to a projected shortfall of $53.4 million in the final quarter of the year that would need to be carefully managed. In particular, he urged strongly that funds foreseen in 2001 for UNHCR's programmed activities should not be diverted to new emergencies. Flexibility in donors' allocations, leaving a larger share of the resources un-earmarked, would allow the Office to redirect some of the existing funds and maintain the activities approved by the Executive Committee in October 2000.

7. Several delegations expressed awareness of the limitations and constraints that had faced UNHCR in 2001 and gave credit to the efforts made to overcome them. One delegation drew attention to the adverse effects of the budget cuts, notably with respect to health, education, sanitation and transportation facilities. One delegation queried whether there had been any progress with respect to earmarking of funds. Another delegation expressed concern as to how UNHCR would manage the anticipated shortfall in 2001 and how needs would be prioritized. Some delegations were also interested to know of the outlook for funding in 2002.

8. In response to these various observations and enquiries, the Director of DCI reiterated the primary importance of receiving funding commitments as early as possible. Other action envisaged included reviewing priorities with the Bureaux - without hasty cuts and changes which might risk disruption to operations; looking at the possibility of using the Working Capital and Guarantee Fund to bridge the gap between the announcement of intended contributions and formal commitment. In addressing the question of funding the 2002 budget, the Director of DCI reminded the Standing Committee of the High Commissioner's request for early, soft commitments, to be then translated into firm pledges at the Pledging Conference in Geneva in December. This would help establish a stronger, more stable link between the approval of the budget by the Executive Committee and the pledging of resources against that budget.

B. Mid-Year Progress Report

9. The Director of DCI then presented the 2001 Mid-Year Progress Report. He pointed out that this report reflected activities carried out in the first part of the year on the basis of a possible 20 per cent budget cut. This was immediately followed by Action 1 and 2. The impact of Action 2, which had been finalized in June, would be included in the Global Report for 2001. He also drew attention to some new features, notably the inclusion in tabular form of an assessment of progress measured against selected indicators.

10. Several delegations commended UNHCR on the continuing improvement of the format and contents of this report and acknowledged that it was a useful mid-year tool for helping donors to reach funding decisions. The tabular presentation of performance indicators and progress achieved was a further step towards results-based budgeting and reporting, and UNHCR was encouraged to pursue this line of reporting to include some indicators common to all programmes. It was noted that more consistent highlighting of the consequences of under-funding would also be helpful.

11. Some delegations regretted that its issue (in mid-September) had left little time for adequte examination of its contents. A number of delegations also commented on or posed questions on specific information contained in the chapter concerning programmes in their country.

12. The Director of DCI regretted that, in order to provide relevant, updated data, it was not possible to make the Mid-Year Progress Report available before the first week in September at the earliest. He also announced that follow-up discussions in response to individual enquiries would take place between the Donor Relations and Resource Mobilization Service (DRRM) and the delegations concerned.

C. 2002 Annual Programme Budget

13. The Deputy High Commissioner (DHC) introduced the *UNHCR Annual Programme Budget for 2002* (A/AC.96/950), and drew attention to the ACABQ's observations contained in the addendum to this document, the *Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions* (A/AC.96/950/Add.1). The ACABQ had noted significant progress in its structure, but recommended greater conciseness. The DHC noted that UNHCR had taken into account the request of the ACABQ to maintain the basic format of the current document and consolidate the gains already made in the move to the unified budget. Further details on the country programmes were available on UNHCR's website.

14. The DHC underlined the importance that the High Commissioner attached to the approval of the budget for 2002; this should be a meaningful commitment to the full resourcing of the budget set at a realistic level. The budget struck a pragmatic balance between basic needs and likely resources. The support of the Executive Committee in advocating strongly that UNHCR should receive its fair, envisaged share of the UN Regular Budget was also sought, so that funds raised for refugees from voluntary contributions would not have to cover administrative costs of the organization. UNHCR was not asking that the known position of many governments on zero growth in the level of the Regular Budget be changed; rather, it was asking for a re-

prioritization within the UN Regular Budget level to allow the Office its envisaged share. Governments needed to speak with one voice on this issue, both in Geneva and at the Fifth Committee in New York.

15. With reference to the Audit Report to be discussed under agenda item 5, the DHC stated that UNHCR took the audit observations very seriously, as reflected in the proposed follow-up actions set out in document A/AC.96/949/Add.1. The High Commissioner was committed to improving UNHCR's performance, including through the establishment of an overall system to manage quality performance. This would ensure that, in a spirit of partnership, donor resources were used effectively.

16. While welcoming the improved presentation and more realistic approach to the 2002 budget document, a number of delegations also encouraged more focus on strategic planning and expected results. They recommended the holding of more preparatory regional workshops, such as those organized in the past year in Thailand and Zambia, which they had found particularly useful.

17. Some delegations commended UNHCR's efforts to re-prioritize its operations into core and non-core activities in line with expected funding levels, and noted that further efforts to prioritize among core activities and across regions were also necessary. Placing emphasis on activities in Africa, and certain thematic areas such as refugee women, children and protection was also underlined as important. Two delegations queried whether the reference to internally displaced persons in the budget document represented a change to UNHCR's policy on IDPs.

18. A number of delegations expressed their support for re-prioritization within the UN regular budget to give UNHCR a greater share, while maintaining their position regarding zero growth. Many delegations also announced their government's anticipated or "soft" contributions towards the 2002 budget.

19. The DHC thanked delegations for their response to the High Commissioner's request for early contributions to UNHCR's budget. She acknowledged requests for more timely submission of the budget document to delegations and indicated that greater efforts would be made to get this out earlier in future. She noted that UNHCR was working on results-based management in its operations, and the challenge was to reflect this better in the budget document. The DHC stated that UNHCR's policy on IDPs had not changed, and that the explanation on this topic in the budget document was designed to complement the policy and not alter it. She also confirmed that UNHCR planned to hold two further strategic planning workshops with donors in two of its operations during the course of the year.

V. COORDINATION

20. This item, together with item 5 were chaired by the Vice-Chairman of the Executive Committee, His Excellency, Ambassador Johan Molander (Sweden).

21. In a statement to the Committee, the Director of the External Relations Department at the International Organization for Migration (IOM) commented on the unique nature of UNHCR and IOM's relationship from the time of their

first emergency partnership work during the 1956 Hungarian outflow, through the Comprehensive Plan of Action for Indochinese Refugees, the Gulf crisis and many other more recent operations. He described how the emerging asylum-migration nexus provided more opportunities and incentives to look jointly for solutions, and encouraged all actors involved to find appropriate ways of coordinating inputs through the inter-agency frameworks for humanitarian coordination.

22. The Head a.i. of Secretariat and Inter-Organization Service (SIOS) presented an update on coordination issues (EC/51/SC/INF.4). She drew attention to the High Commissioner's emphasis on the growing need to link issues of refugees to development, and the progress made at the High-Level Committee on Management's Task Force on Security concerning arrangements for sharing the costs of the enhanced UN security system. She highlighted a number of areas where progress was being made both in strengthening the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance among the United Nations agencies, and also in UNHCR's bilateral relations with other governmental and non-governmental partner organizations.

23. Several delegations commented on the usefulness of such updates and looked forward to their continuation. One delegation strongly encouraged an early completion of the first draft of the Memorandum of Understanding between UNHCR and WFP, since this was needed by all concerned as soon as possible.

VI. MANAGEMENT, FINANCE, OVERSIGHT AND HUMAN RESOURCES

24. The new Controller and Director of the Division of Resource Management (DRM) first introduced the document *Voluntary Funds Administered by the United Nations High Commissioner: Accounts for the year 2000* (A/AC.96/948), drawing particular attention to Statement 1 (p.18) of these accounts, which showed the decrease in total expenditure from $1.02 billion in 1999 to $783 million in 2000. This had been due partly to the Kosovo crisis in 1999, but also to the reduction in funding which had caused considerable constraints, and had prompted the prioritization process of Actions 1, 2 and 3 in 2001.

25. She then presented the *Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds Administered by UNHCR for the period ended December 2000* (A/AC.96/949), noting that, for the first time in UNHCR's history, the Board had given a qualified opinion on UNHCR's accounts. She drew attention to UNHCR's response to this report, as contained in the document *Measures taken or proposed in response to the recommendations in the report of the board of auditors* (A/AC.96/949/Add.1).

26. She emphasized that the uncertainty expressed by the auditors concerned implementing partners' expenditure amounting to some $43 million for which reports had not been made available, but did not suggest anything irregular about this expenditure. It was rather a question of unacceptably long delays between the expenditure and the receipt of adequate reporting from the implementing partner in the field, and UNHCR was actively engaged in addressing this shortcoming. This issue would be included as a specific measurement of management performance in the objectives and appraisals of senior managers, and additional guidelines and training would be introduced

for field staff to ensure that they were aware of their responsibilities in this regard.

27. The auditors had also requested UNHCR to review the appropriateness of engaging in projects which were not of direct assistance to refugees, a review of which the High Commissioner had initiated at the beginning of the year under Action 1. Better definitions for core and non-core categories had been established and priorities determined on that basis. She also drew attention to recommendations of the Board of Auditors related to the Integrated Systems Project and explained that this Project had been suspended pending a review of its overall design and compatibility with a Corporate Operating Model, would be taken into account for any future activities in that area.

28. In closing, the Controller observed that although there had been progress in some areas of response to the auditors' recommendations, others still required attention and underlined UNHCR's intention to make a concerted effort to address these for the year 2001.

29. It was suggested by one delegation that the information on Extra-Budgetary in Kind Donations to UNHCR, contained in document A/AC.96/948, should in future be included in UNHCR's annual report.

VII. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

30. At the invitation of the Chairman, the Director of CASWANAME briefed the Standing Committee on UNHCR's contingency plan for a potentially huge exodus of Afghans to neighbouring countries. He explained that the plan had a regional perspective and covered an initial six-month emergency programme. An appeal, based on worst-case scenario projections, was being launched to cover anticipated funding needs of $268 million for a six-month period, and it was estimated that up to 700 international and national staff would be deployed to bolster the staff presently in the region. The Director of CASWANAME pointed out that UNHCR's capacity to respond to this emergency may face serious constraints in terms of human and material resources, should the worst occur. He underlined that the international support of governments would be crucial for all concerned.

31. Several delegations expressed their concern as to how UNHCR could mobilize such a large volume of resources and staff without prejudicing other operations. One delegation also enquired whether there was any duplication with the Afghan Support Group meeting in Berlin on 27 September 2001.

32. Responding to these enquiries, the Director of CASWANAME explained that emergency roster staff were being mobilized and that staff currently without a posting or between assignments were being contacted to ascertain their availability. Appeals for material and logistical support, including airlifting of supplies to Pakistan by donors were being made. It was hoped that the meeting in Berlin would feed into the Forum on Afghan Refugee and Displaced persons, scheduled in Geneva on 5 and 6 October 2001. This meeting, to be co-chaired by the High Commissioner and by the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator, aimed to help address some of the questions and concerns from the political and strategic perspectives. The Chairman then

shared information with respect to the current crisis as it pertained to his country.

33. Also under this agenda item, the Chairman shared with the Committee a letter he had received from the Ambassador of Belgium, currently holding the Presidency of the European Union. This letter is contained in Annex.

34. One delegation observed that, while not opposed in principle to the proposal contained in this letter, more time was needed to consider the request and to weigh its possible implications. It was agreed that delegations wishing to state their position should make this known to the Chairman in the course of the week. The EU presidency indicated availability to provide clarifications as required.

35. The Secretary then provided practical details of arrangements for the forthcoming session of the Executive Committee, from 1 to 5 October 2001.

36. There being no other business, the Chairman declared the meeting closed.

EU Presidency Voorzitterschap Vorsitz Presidence UE

www.eu2001.be

Mission de Belgique à Genève
L'Ambassadeur

Geneva, 24 September 2001

JMN/nb

Sir,

I should like to submit for your consideration, as Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the question of the European Commission's seating at the meetings of the Committee and of the Standing Committee.

The European Commission attaches high importance to matters of international protection, given the progressive transfer of responsibility to it for asylum issues and rights of third country nationals. The entry into force in May 1999 of the Amsterdam Treaty marked the beginning of a transitional period of such transfer of competence, which is of direct relevance to the work of UNHCR. Additionally, the EC is one of UNHCR's top donors and has a direct interest in its operational programmes for refugees.

I would thus like to suggest that, for reasons of cohesiveness, the European Commission be seated next to the Presidency of the European Union, currently Belgium, at the meetings of the Standing Committee and of the Executive Committee. I would be grateful for your concurrence to this request.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Jean-Marie NOIRFALISSE

H.E Ambassador A. KHORRAM
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UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.96/959
5 October 2001

Original: ENGLISH

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Fifty-second session

REPORT OF THE FIFTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME (Geneva, 1-5 October 2001)

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(Geneva, 1-5 October 2001)

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II. Opening Statement by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme at its fifty-second session

III. Chairman's summary of the general debate

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Opening of the Session

1. The Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme held its fifty-second session at the Palais des Nations in Geneva from 1 to 5 October 2001. It was opened by the outgoing Chairman, His Excellency, Ambassador Ali Khorram (Islamic Republic of Iran).

2. Ambassador Khorram paid tribute to the High Commissioner for his useful initiatives since taking office, noting that the past year had been one of transition with new appointments in the senior management team.

3. He recalled that his main priorities at the outset of his tenure had been two-fold. He had sought to encourage and enhance dialogue between host and donor countries in order to foster mutual understanding, and to reassure host countries that they were not alone in attempting to fulfil their commitments on behalf of the international community. In the course of the year, he had addressed the Intergovernmental Consultations (IGC) as Chairman of the UNHCR Executive Committee, calling attention to the need for a global strategy to address the root causes of the problem of refugees and displacements. His other priority had concerned staff security on which constructive discussions had taken place. Continued vigilance by all concerned, including the Committee, was still necessary.

4. The outgoing Chairman noted with satisfaction that the past year had been fruitful, with the adoption of 10 decisions and conclusions at the fifty-first session. These included one on the Pledging Conference and another on World Refugee Day that had subsequently been endorsed by the General Assembly in New York and implemented in the course of the year. The process of Global Consultations on International Protection had been initiated and would continue into 2002. The Executive Committee had also played a more active role in respect of programme and funding issues, and had been regularly consulted during the process of Actions 1,2 and 3. In this context, he had shared views with the High Commissioner on a number of issues, insisting in particular on the need for measures to enhance the role of host developing countries in the decision-making process. He had also reiterated the importance of increasing international solidarity and burden-sharing with a view to providing more assistance and financial resources to UNHCR.

5. In closing, the outgoing Chairman recalled the enriching and stimulating experience he had had during his term of office, including visits to refugee camps in Thailand and the Caucasus.

B. Election of Officers

6. Under Rule 10 of its Rules of Procedure, the Committee elected the following officers by acclamation:

Chairman: H.E. Ambassador Johan Molander (Sweden)

Vice-Chairman: H.E. Ambassador Fisseha Yimer (Ethiopia)

Rapporteur: Mr. Hajime Kishimori (Japan)

C. Representation on the Committee

7. The following members of the Committee were represented at the session:

Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Holy See, Hungary, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Madagascar, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Venezuela.

8. The Governments of the following States were present as observers:

Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Dominican Republic, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Indonesia, Iraq, Iceland, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malawi, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Monaco, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Panama, Peru, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Swaziland, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Ukraine, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia (Federal Republic), Zambia.

9. Palestine was represented as an observer.

10. Also present as observers were: Council of Europe, Council of the European Union, European Commission, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), International Organization for Migration (IOM), League of Arab States, Organization of African Unity (OAU), Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and Sovereign Order of Malta.

11. The United Nations system was represented as follows:

United Nations, United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Volunteers Programme (UNV), United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near-East (UNRWA), United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), International Labour Organization (ILO), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

12. A total of 67 non-governmental organizations were represented by observers.

D. Adoption of the Agenda and other Organizational Matters

13. The Executive Committee adopted by consensus the following agenda (A/AC.96/955):

1. Opening of the session
2. Election of officers
3. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters
4. Statement by the High Commissioner and general debate
5. Reports on the work of the Standing Committee
   (a) International protection
   (b) Programme, administrative and financial matters
6. Consideration and adoption of UNHCR's annual programme budget for 2002
7. Reports relating to programme oversight
8. Meetings of the Standing Committee in 2002
9. Consideration of the provisional agenda of the fifty-third session of the Executive Committee
10. Any other business
11. Adoption of the report of the fifty-second session of the Executive Committee
12. Closure of the session

E. Opening Statement by the Chairman of the Executive Committee

14. The incoming Chairman of the Committee, His Excellency, Ambassador Johan Molander (Sweden) confirmed that staff security must continue to figure prominently on the agenda, undertaking to continue the valuable work initiated by his predecessor. He acknowledged the invaluable contribution made by the Rapporteur of the fifty-first session, Mr. Haiko Alfeld (South Africa), in guiding the third track of the Global Consultations on International Protection and for his successful conduct of the consultations on the Committee's draft conclusions and decisions. He also paid tribute to the outgoing Assistant High Commissioner, Mr. Søren Jessen-Petersen, for his many years of dedicated, energetic and committed work.

15. The Chairman then outlined his key objectives for the year ahead. He first emphasized the need to focus on the potential of refugees to become contributors to development - both in their countries of asylum and upon their return home. This focus would help give refugees back their dignity, in line with the theme of "Respect" in UNHCR's 50th anniversary year. He also

called attention to the special capacity and role that refugee women had to offer - one that was frequently underutilized.

16. Referring to the suggestions presented by the High Commissioner under Action 3, the Chairman intended to call informal consultations on refining the mechanisms for funding and burden-sharing. He also expressed his strong commitment to the pursuit of the Global Consultations process which dealt with the heart of UNHCR's mandate. The third track meetings had provided a useful format for discussions on how to meet protection needs in a context of new challenges not foreseen by the 1951 Convention relating to Status of Refugees and hoped that, in the course of the coming year, the Global Consultations would identify challenges and point to follow-up action which would strengthen the international protection regime.

17. In closing, he referred to the tragic terrorist attacks of 11 September and urged the "family of nations" to resist any inclination to use this as a pretext to undermine the right to seek and enjoy asylum, or to stir up animosity towards asylum-seekers or refugees. Finally, he stressed his determination to mobilize the various capacities of the Executive Committee to assist the High Commissioner to fulfil his role in promoting durable solutions to refugee situations.

II. WORK OF THE FIFTY-SECOND SESSION

18. The High Commissioner delivered an opening statement as the basis for the general debate. This statement is contained in Annex II.

19. The Committee also heard a statement by the High Commissioner for Human Rights in which she spoke on issues of responsibility for addressing the protection needs of vulnerable persons within complex emergency situations. This work necessitated diverse and complementary action and strategies, according to the mandates of the various organisations or actors. The core nature of protection work had its legal foundations in refugee law, international humanitarian law and international human rights law. The Commission on Human Rights and its mechanisms were providing useful clarification of the implications of human rights law and practice. She also described human rights field operations in complex emergency situations, adding that her Office still needed to learn from the experience of protection work accumulated over many years by UNHCR and ICRC.

20. The High Commissioner for Human Rights then outlined the areas in which her Office could support the work of protection in the field: providing human rights technical advice and assistance; facilitating or assisting initiatives to combat climates of impunity; and assisting efforts to advocate for victims, including through human rights monitoring, reporting and analysis. In closing, she drew attention to the current crisis in the region of Afghanistan and reconfirmed her Office's commitment to working in partnership with other agencies in order to help address the critical protection needs of the Afghan people.

21. The Chairman's summary of the general debate is contained in Annex III. The full account of the deliberations of the Committee, including the statements or other interventions made by delegations on all the agenda items

of the meeting, as well as the closing statements by the Chairman and the High Commissioner, are contained in the summary records of the session.

III. DECISIONS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE[1]

A. Conclusion on international protection

22. *The Executive Committee,*

General

(a) *Notes* that the year 2001 marks the 50th anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, which together with its 1967 Protocol, has continuously served as the cornerstone of the international refugee protection regime;

(b) *Notes* with satisfaction that one hundred and forty-one States are now party to one instrument or both, *encourages* States and UNHCR to strengthen their efforts to promote broader accession to these instruments and *stresses* the importance of their full application by States parties, consistent with their commitments and obligations;

(c) *Re-emphasizes* that the protection of refugees is primarily the responsibility of States, whose full and effective cooperation, action and political resolve are required to enable the Office of the High Commissioner to fulfil its mandated functions, *inter alia*, to promote and facilitate the admission, reception and humane treatment of refugees and to ensure protection-oriented solutions, in accordance with international law and international standards;

(d) *Recognizes* that some countries of asylum, in particular developing countries and countries in transition which host large numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers carry a heavy burden;

(e) *Recognizes* the positive contributions that refugees make to host countries;

(f) *Reiterates* its strong commitment to international solidarity, burden-sharing and international cooperation to share responsibilities; *stresses* also the national and international responsibilities of countries of origin; and *reaffirms* UNHCR's catalytic role in assisting and supporting countries receiving refugees, particularly developing countries, and in mobilizing assistance from the international community to address the impact of large-scale refugee populations;

(g) *Welcomes* the initiative of UNHCR to launch the Global Consultations on International Protection which provide an important forum for open discussion on complex legal and operational protection issues;

(h) *Affirms* the intention to pursue, with broadly based participation, follow-up activities stemming from the Global Consultations, which would be set out in a joint Executive Committee and UNHCR Agenda for

[1] Decisions adopted by the Standing Committee at inter-sessional meetings in 2001 are listed in Annex I.

Protection and could include, as appropriate, the development of Executive Committee conclusions, the holding of further expert consultations, or other processes;

(i) *Stresses* the importance of according special attention to the protection needs of vulnerable refugees, including women, children and the elderly, in the application of the international refugee instruments and related protection standards;

Resettlement

(j) *Emphasizes* that the ultimate goal of international protection is to achieve a durable solution for refugees and *commends* States that continue to facilitate these solutions, notably voluntary repatriation and, where appropriate and feasible, local integration and resettlement, while recognizing that voluntary repatriation in conditions of safety and dignity remains the preferred solution for refugees;

(k) *Commends* in particular efforts made by States and by UNHCR to ensure the diverse uses of resettlement as an important tool of international protection, as a durable solution to be used strategically along with the other two durable solutions, as appropriate, as part of a comprehensive approach to enhance protection, and as an expression of international solidarity and a means of burden or responsibility sharing, particularly in countries of asylum coping with large numbers of refugees or protracted refugee situations;

(l) *Acknowledges* that resettlement is a process beginning with the identification and assessment of refugees requiring protection and ultimately resulting in a durable solution leading to their successful reception and integration; and in this context takes note of the principles on the development and implementation of reception and integration practices developed by the *International Conference on the Reception and Integration of Resettled Refugees* convened in Norrkoping, Sweden, from 25 to 27 April 2001;[2]

(m) *Encourages* initiatives directed at diversifying resettlement opportunities by further increasing the number of resettlement countries, thereby sharing resettlement needs more widely, and meeting increased resettlement needs; acknowledges that capacity-building is essential to develop and sustain the necessary conditions for successful integration of resettled refugees in emerging resettlement countries, and underlines the important catalytic role which UNHCR should play in this regard; acknowledges the important role that regional arrangements have played in certain regions in supporting diversified resettlement opportunities;

(n) *Recognizes* the importance of further strengthening tripartite partnerships, and of strategically enhancing a consultative and collaborative approach to resettlement and *notes* that further efforts are needed to ensure more responsive and speedy processing, better identification of urgent needs, and coordination; and urges further UNHCR efforts to ensure the integrity of the processing of the resettlement caseload and *encourages* States and UNHCR to continue to

[2] See EC/51/SC/INF.4., Annex

pursue a strategic and systematic approach to the problem of attempted fraud or other abuse;

Statelessness

(o) *Notes* the global dimension of statelessness, *welcomes* UNHCR's efforts within its mandate to broaden its activities both geographically and substantively, and *encourages* States to cooperate with UNHCR in identifying measures to reduce statelessness and in devising appropriate solutions for stateless persons who are refugees, as well as for stateless persons who are not;

(p) *Reiterates* its call for States to consider accession to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness and *encourages* UNHCR to continue to promote further accessions to and full implementation of both instruments by the States concerned;

(q) *Encourages* UNHCR to continue to make available its technical and advisory services to avoid and reduce cases of statelessness and, in this regard, to strengthen partnerships with regional and other international organizations working in this area;

(r) *Takes note* with particular concern that problems of statelessness can impact disproportionately on women and children, due to the particular operation of nationality and birth registration laws; *underlines* the importance, notably for women, of identity documentation and proper registration of births and marriages; and *calls upon* States to adopt all necessary measures in this regard;

(s) Strongly *condemning* the trafficking of persons, especially women and children, which represents a grave violation of their human rights; *expressing concern* that many victims of trafficking are rendered effectively stateless due to an inability to establish their identity and nationality status; *calls upon* States to cooperate in the establishment of identity and nationality status of victims of trafficking so as to facilitate appropriate resolutions of their situations, respecting the internationally recognized human rights of the victims.

B. Conclusion on registration of refugees and asylum-seekers

23. *The Executive Committee,*

Recalling its Conclusion No. 22 (XXXII) on the protection of asylum-seekers in situations of large-scale influx, Conclusion No. 35 (XXXV) on identity documents for refugees, Conclusion No. 39 (XXXVI) and Conclusion No. 64 (XLI) on refugee women and international protection, as well as Conclusion No. 73 (XLIV) on refugee protection and sexual violence;

Noting also that the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees in article 27, calls on States Parties to issue identity papers to refugees;

Mindful of the importance accorded to registration in the independent evaluation of UNHCR's emergency preparedness and response to the Kosovo crisis;

Welcoming the discussion which took place on registration in the context of the Global Consultations on International Protection;

(a) *Acknowledges* the importance of registration as a tool of protection, including protection against *refoulement*, protection against forcible recruitment, protection of access to basic rights, family reunification of refugees and identification of those in need of special assistance, and as a means to enable the quantification and assessment of needs and to implement appropriate durable solutions;

(b) *Recommends* that the registration of refugees and asylum-seekers should be guided by the following basic considerations:

(i) Registration should be a continuing process to record essential information at the time of initial displacement, as well as any subsequent demographic and other changes in the refugee population (such as births, deaths, new arrivals, departures, cessation, naturalization, etc.);

(ii) The registration process should abide by the fundamental principles of confidentiality;

(iii) The registration process should to the extent possible be easily accessible, and take place in a safe and secure location;

(iv) Registration should be conducted in a non-intimidating, non-threatening and impartial manner, with due respect for the safety and dignity of refugees;

(v) Personnel conducting the registration, including, where necessary, refugees and asylum-seekers, should be adequately trained, should include a sufficient number of female staff and should have clear instructions on the procedures and requirements for registration, including the need for confidentiality of information collected; special measures should be taken to ensure the integrity of the registration process;

(vi) In principle, refugees should be registered on an individual basis with the following basic information being recorded: identity document and number, photograph, name, sex, date of birth (or age), marital status, special protection and assistance needs, level of education, occupation (skills), household (family) size and composition, date of arrival, current location and place of origin;

(c) *Encourages* States and UNHCR, on the basis of existing expertise, to develop further and implement registration guidelines to ensure the quality and comparability of registered data, especially regarding special needs, occupational skills and level of education;

(d) *Also encourages* States and UNHCR to introduce new techniques and tools to enhance the identification and documentation of refugees and asylum-seekers, including biometrics features, and to share these with a view towards developing a more standardized worldwide registration system;

(e) *Acknowledges* the importance to the international community, particularly States, UNHCR and other relevant organizations, of sharing statistical data;

(f) *Recognizes* the confidential nature of personal data and the need to continue to protect confidentiality; also recognizes that the appropriate sharing of some personal data in line with data protection principles can assist States to combat fraud, to address irregular movements of refugees and asylum-seekers, and to identify those not entitled to international protection under the 1951 Convention and/or 1967 Protocol;

(g) *Requests* States, which have not yet done so, to take all necessary measures to register and document refugees and asylum-seekers on their territory as quickly as possible upon their arrival, bearing in mind the resources available, and where appropriate to seek the support and co-operation of UNHCR;

(h) *Emphasizes* the critical role of material, financial, technical and human resources in assisting host countries in registering and documenting refugees and asylum-seekers, particularly developing countries confronted with large-scale influxes and protracted refugee situations.

C. Conclusion on the follow-up to the 1996 Geneva Conference on the problems of refugees, displaced persons, migration and asylum issues

24. *The Executive Committee,*

Recalling the relevant conclusions of the Executive Committee at its forty-seventh, forty-eighth, forty-ninth, fiftieth and fifty-first sessions pertaining to the follow-up to the 1996 Geneva Conference;

Recalling also the decision of the fifth meeting of the Steering Group (July 2000) to continue activities in the "Follow-up to the 1996 Geneva Conference on the Problems of Refugees, Displaced Persons, Migration and Asylum Issues" for five years, with the emphasis placed on four broad thematic issues;

Reaffirming the importance and continuing validity of the Programme of Action of 1996 as a basis and guiding tool for future activities;

(a) *Welcomes* the progress made in a number of the CIS countries in implementing the Programme of Action in both governmental and non-governmental sectors;

(b) *Welcomes* further the Work Plan for the Thematic Issues jointly prepared by UNHCR, IOM, OSCE and the Council of Europe in accordance with Recommendations adopted at the fifth meeting of the Steering Group;

(c) *Appreciates* the efforts made by the High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe to support the follow-up process, to mobilize resources for this, and welcomes their efforts to strengthen inter-agency cooperation;

(d) *Welcomes* the first Expert Meeting in the framework of the newly launched thematic process on the subject of Citizenship and Statelessness that was held on 11-13 December 2000 in Kyiv, as well as international efforts aimed at improving migration and border management, with due respect to refugee protection matters, and encourages all lead agencies to continue the implementation of the Work Plan;

(e) *Calls upon* Governments in all countries of the CIS, who bear the primary responsibility for addressing the acute problems of population displacement that they face, to strengthen their commitment, both practical and political, to implementing the Recommendations in the spirit of the Programme of Action, and encourages all interested States and intergovernmental organizations to participate actively in the planned activities according to their interests and priorities, thus contributing to achieving consistent and far-reaching progress in the follow-up process, which would lead to holding the first high-level review meeting in 2002, prior to the fifty-third session of the Executive Committee;

(f) *Notes* that the serious challenges faced by the countries of the region cannot be met by the resources and experience of those countries alone;

(g) *Reiterates* the importance of joint efforts in pursuing the established goals of the Programme of Action by achieving, *inter alia*, a higher level of political support, durable political solutions to conflicts, further democratization and building of civil society, full implementation of legislation, adequate cooperation on a regional or bilateral level, greater involvement of international financial institutions and development agencies, availability of financial resources, and ensuring international cooperation and support in the spirit of solidarity and burden-sharing;

(h) *Welcomes* the progress made in building civil society, particularly through the development of the non-governmental sector, the development of cooperation between NGOs and the Governments of a number of countries of the CIS, and *calls on* Governments of the countries of the CIS to further facilitate the formation and activities of NGOs and, along with international organizations, to further strengthen their cooperation with NGOs, with the aim to further encourage their continued involvement in the follow-up to the 1996 Geneva Conference.

(i) *Requests* the High Commissioner to keep the Executive Committee informed of the implementation of the Work Plan for Thematic Issues and of the progress achieved in the follow-up to the 1996 Geneva Conference.

D. Decision on administrative, financial and programme matters

25. *The Executive Committee,*

(a) *Confirms* that the activities proposed under the Annual Programme Budget for the year 2002 as set out in document A/AC.96/950 have been found, on review, to be consistent with the Statute of the Office of the High Commissioner (General Assembly Resolution 428 (V)), the High Commissioner's "Good Offices" functions as recognized, promoted or requested by the General Assembly, the Security Council, or the

Secretary-General, and the relevant provisions of the *Financial Rules for Voluntary Funds Administered by the High Commissioner for Refugees*;

(b) *Approves* the programmes and budgets for Regional Programmes, Global Programmes and Headquarters under the 2002 Annual Programme Budget amounting to $ 801,683,000, including an Operational Reserve of $ 72,880,300 (representing 10 per cent of programmed activities), all of which are detailed in the Table II.1 ; which together with the United Nations Regular Budget contribution of $ 19,891,000 and provisions for Junior Professional Officers ($ 7 million) bring total requirements in 2002 to $ 828,574,000; and *authorizes* the High Commissioner within this total appropriation, to effect adjustments in Regional Programmes, Global Programmes and the Headquarters budgets;

(c) *Approves* the revised Annual Programme Budget for the year 2001 amounting to $ 782,111,600, which together with the United Nations Regular Budget contribution of $ 19,178,800 and provisions for Junior Professional Officers of $ 7 million as well as the needs under Supplementary Programmes in 2001 of $ 66,119,400, bring total requirements in 2001 to $ 874,409,800 (Table II.1, p.42);

(d) *Notes* the *Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the year ended 31 December 2000* (A/AC.96/949), and the High Commissioner's *Follow-up Actions to the Board of Auditors Report* (A/AC.96/949/Add.1); as well as the *Report of the ACABQ on UNHCR's Annual Programme Budget for the year 2002* (A/AC.96/950/Add.1), the *Report of the High Commissioner on the work of UNHCR's Inspection Activities* (A/AC.96/946) *and the Report on UNHCR's Evaluation Activities* (A/AC.96/947), and requests to be kept regularly informed on the measures taken to address the recommendations and the observations raised in these various oversight documents;

(e) *Requests* the High Commissioner, within the resources available, to respond flexibly and efficiently to the needs currently indicated under the Annual Programme Budget for the year 2002, and *authorizes* him, in the case of additional new emergency needs that cannot be met fully from the Operational Reserve, to create Supplementary Programmes and issue Special Appeals;

(f) *Urges* Member States, in the light of the extensive needs to be addressed by the Office of the High Commissioner, to respond generously, promptly, predictably and adequately to his appeal for resources to meet in full the approved 2002 Annual Programme Budget, and explore future ways to ensure a coherent and broader financing base, founded on the principle of solidarity and burden-sharing.

E. Decision on guidelines on supplementary activities

26. *The Executive Committee,*

Recalling the endorsement by the General Assembly in its resolution 54/146 of 17 December 1999, of a unified annual programme budget for the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner,

Noting that the Financial Rules for Voluntary Funds Administered by UNHCR define "Supplementary Programmes" as "those activities that arise after the approval of the Annual Programme Budget and before the approval of the next Annual Programme Budget, and which cannot be fully met from the Operational Reserve. They will be funded through contributions in reply to special appeals"[3],

Recalling the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions[4] that the Executive Committee provide to the High Commissioner guidelines for undertaking supplementary activities,

Recalling the *Decision on Guiding Principles applicable to the Resourcing of UNHCR's Unified Budget* adopted by the Standing Committee at its 18th meeting[5] expressing support for regular consultations in addressing issues of resource mobilization as part of efforts to maintain full transparency on all budgetary issues,

Recalling also its decision adopted at its 21st meeting[6], *reaffirming* its support for the review undertaken by the High Commissioner under his Actions 1, 2 and 3, and *expressing its commitment* to the principles resulting from Action 1,

(a) *Proposes* the application of the following criteria in undertaking supplementary activities:

(i) The unified Annual Programme Budget should remain the framework for the activities of the Office, thereby ensuring transparency, cohesiveness and accountability for all activities undertaken in support of those of concern to the Office;

(ii) Options available for resourcing new activities include reallocations within an existing approved project budget; transfers between appropriations; and allocations from the Operational Reserve. When the volume of the activities is such that they cannot be met from resources within the approved budget level, a Supplementary Programme would be required, in accordance with the provisions of the Financial Rules. The Supplementary Programme would subsequently be incorporated into the next proposed Annual Programme Budget;

(iii) In undertaking supplementary activities, the criteria and characteristics listed by the ACABQ in its *Overview of UNHCR's activities 1997-1999* (A/AC.96/900, Add. 3 and 4), and in the *Guidelines on priority-setting* appended to the results of the High Commissioner's Action 1[7] should apply to these activities;

(iv) In developing or reviewing partnership agreements with other entities that may contribute to the work of the Office, particular provision should be made for their involvement and contribution to activities that are the subject of Supplementary Programmes;

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[3] A/AC.96/503/Rev.7, art. I, 1.6 (g).
[4] A/AC.96/900/Add.3, para. 40.
[5] A/AC.96/939, Annex, B.
[6] A/AC.96/956, Annex, A.
[7] See A/AC.96/950, Annex 5, pp. 109-111, paras 2.3-2.6; 3.1-3.2.

(v) In the case of supplementary activities such as those relating to internally displaced persons or to longer-term reintegration activities, the Office should ensure that resources are assured and attainable.

F. Decision on programme of work of the Standing Committee in 2002

27. *The Executive Committee,*

Having reviewed the issues before it at its fifty-second session, including its general debate based on the High Commissioner's statement, the work undertaken by the Standing Committee during the year, and having in mind the decisions and conclusions of its fifty-second session;

(a) *Decides* to adopt as the framework for the programme of work of the Standing Committee in 2002 the following items: international protection; programme/protection policy; programme and funding; governance; coordination; and management, financial, oversight and human resources;

(b) *Requests* that member States review, at the Planning Meeting scheduled for December 2001, specific proposals for inclusion in the work programme for 2002, taking into consideration the calendar noted by the Planning Meeting in 2000, with a view to submitting their agreed work programme to the first Standing Committee in 2002 for formal adoption; and *requests* that member States bear in mind the desirability of scheduling items over a biennial or longer period;

(c) *Requests* that UNHCR include in its documentation on relevant items the audit and ACABQ recommendations as well as steps taken to implement those recommendations and related Executive Committee decisions and conclusions;

(d) *Authorizes* the Standing Committee to add and to delete items, as appropriate, to its inter-sessional programme of work;

(e) *Decides* to convene no more than three meetings of the Standing Committee in 2002 to be held in February/March, June/July and prior to the fifty-third plenary session of the Executive Committee;

(f) *Calls on* the Standing Committee to report on its work to the fifty-third session of the Executive Committee;

(g) *Calls upon* its members to continue efforts to ensure that the Executive Committee is a forum for substantive and interactive debate, and provides guidance that can be implemented by UNHCR within its given mandate.

G. Decision on the provisional agenda of the fifty-third session

28. *The Executive Committee,*

Decides to adopt the following provisional agenda for the fifty-third session of the Executive Committee:

1. Opening of the session
2. Election of officers

3. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters
4. Annual theme
5. Reports on the work of the Standing Committee as they relate to:
   (i) international protection; and
   (ii) programme, administrative and financial matters
6. Consideration and adoption of the annual programme budget
7. Reports relating to evaluation and inspection
8. Meetings of the Standing Committee in 2003
9. Consideration of the provisional agenda of the fifty-fourth session of the Executive Committee
10. Any other business
11. Adoption of the draft report of the fifty-third session of the Executive Committee
12. Closing of the session

H. Decision on observer participation in 2001-2002

29. *The Executive Committee,*

(a) *Approves* applications by the following Government Observer delegations for participation in meetings of the Standing Committee from October 2001 to October 2002:

Albania, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Cuba, Czech Republic, Cyprus, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Guatemala, Kenya, Latvia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Lithuania, Myanmar, Nepal, Peru, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Swaziland, Ukraine;

(b) *Authorizes* the Standing Committee to decide upon any additional applications from Government Observer delegations to participate in its meetings during the aforementioned period;

(c) *Approves* the following list of intergovernmental and international organizations to be invited by the High Commissioner to participate as observers in relevant meetings of its Standing Committee from October 2001 to October 2002:

United Nations specialized agencies, departments, funds and programmes, European Commission, International Committee of the Red Cross, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Sovereign Order of Malta, Executive Secretariat of the Commonwealth of Independent States, League of Arab States, Organization of African Unity, Organization of the Islamic Conference, Council of Europe, International Organization for Migration.

ANNEX I

Decisions and conclusions adopted by the Standing Committee in 2001

In accordance with the authority vested in it by the Executive Committee, the Standing Committee in 2001 adopted a number of decisions on matters included in its programme of work. The texts of these decisions are annexed to the reports of Standing Committee meetings as follows:

A/AC.96/945 *Report of the twentieth meeting of the Standing Committee (12 - 14 March 2001)*

Decision on programme and funding

Conclusion on reinforcing a community development approach

A/AC.96/956 Report of the twenty-first meeting of the Standing Committee (25 - 27 June 2001)

Decision on overall programme and funding projections for 2001

Decision on proposals for budget structure

ANNEX II

Opening Statement by the
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
at the Fifty-second Session of the Executive Committee
of the High Commissioner's Programme

(Monday, 1 October 2001)

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to be with you here today - this being my first plenary session of the Executive Committee. I have met many of you individually over the last few months, but it is good to see all of you together. I am particularly pleased to welcome Mary Robinson, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, who has kindly agreed to address the Executive Committee.

Let me begin by extending a special welcome to Mexico as a new member of the Committee. I would like to congratulate the incoming Bureau and its Chairman, Ambassador Molander of Sweden. His experience and knowledge of refugee affairs will certainly be an asset to the Committee. I would also like to thank the outgoing Chairman, Ambassador Khorram of the Islamic Republic of Iran. It was privilege to work with him. I greatly appreciate the commitment that he has shown to refugees and to the work of this Committee over the last year, and I hope we will continue to benefit from his keen insight.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My first nine months have gone by very quickly. It did not take long for me to learn what a rich history this Office has. In particular, I have been deeply impressed by the high calibre and dedication of its staff, many of whom make enormous personal sacrifices and risk their lives daily to help others. I would like to pay particular tribute to my predecessor, Mrs Sadako Ogata - a great woman and a great leader.

I arrived at a difficult moment, but also at an interesting and challenging time. Last year, UNHCR commemorated its 50th anniversary. This year, we mark the 50th anniversary of the 1951 Refugee Convention. These two occasions allow us to take a fresh look at where we stand today, and to review the direction in which we are heading.

In her statement to the Executive Committee last year, Mrs Ogata identified a number of key challenges for UNHCR. Foremost was the need to strengthen UNHCR's emergency preparedness and response capacity. This is vital, as we are constantly facing new emergencies. The first major crisis I had to deal with this year was in Guinea, where my top priority was to ensure safe access to and safe passage for refugees. I was able to make progress by linking up with a political process, convincing the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone to change its agenda. This was followed by yet another crisis in the Balkans, with more than 100,000 people being forced to flee their homes in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. I was there on Friday last

week, consolidating the important work that we have begun there. In the first eight months of this year, we provided emergency support to 22 countries.

All this was before the barbaric terrorist attacks on the United States of America on 11 September. These attacks, and the unfolding humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan and the surrounding countries, are a sobering reminder that emergencies are hard to predict. We need to be ready at all times, and - together with our partners - we need to be able to respond to new crises in an efficient and co-ordinated manner. Indeed, we have taken a number of measures over the last year to further enhance our emergency preparedness and response capacity. In particular, improved training of staff, an increase in the number of deployable emergency core staff, new stand-by arrangements with governments and partners, and an increase in our emergency stockpile.

For the current humanitarian emergency in and around Afghanistan, as you know we are preparing for a massive relief operation. I hope that donors will respond positively to our appeal for US$ 268 million to cover the next six months. This will enable us to prepare for an influx of up to 1.5 million refugees into neighbouring countries - particularly Pakistan and Iran. We count on donors' generosity.

Another serious challenge for UNHCR is staff security. The events of September last year, when three of our colleagues were savagely killed in West Timor and another was brutally murdered in Guinea, remain imprinted on all of our minds as some of the darkest days in UNHCR's history. But it did not end there. Another of our colleagues was murdered in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in March this year, and this was followed barely a month later by the appalling killings of six members of the International Committee of the Red Cross. All these deaths are a reminder of the tremendous sacrifices made every year by humanitarian staff who risk their lives to save others in some of the most dangerous corners of the world. As a tribute to our slain colleagues, a permanent memorial will be inaugurated on 12 December in front of the UNHCR Headquarters. It will serve as a constant reminder.

But while it is important to remember the past, we must also prepare for the future. Addressing the staff security issue will remain one of my major priorities. Our mission will never be without risks, as we need to be close to those whom we serve. But there are limits as to what we can accept. Proper training and the provision of the necessary technical equipment are basic minimum conditions for operating in remote duty stations.

In the last year, we have set up new security training courses for staff and redefined the responsibilities and accountability of managers. We have also supported the enhancement of UNSECOORD, the UN system-wide security mechanism. But there are still major problems to overcome. I have strongly protested to the authorities in Indonesia about the unacceptably light sentences given to those responsible for the murder of our colleagues in West Timor. We must take steps to ensure that there is no impunity for those who attack humanitarian staff. Funding constraints also affect us. Let me be blunt. Expressions of sympathy for the deaths of our colleagues mean little when the resources needed to improve security are not forthcoming.

Let me then turn to another major challenge for UNHCR: the management of complex population flows. This includes "mixed flows" of refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants, and "mixed-motive" migration, where people leave

their homes for a combination of political, economic and other reasons. Smuggling and trafficking of people is on the rise. With regular arrival routes closed, many refugees continue to turn to smugglers to reach safety, in spite of the dangers and the financial costs involved. Other migrants portray themselves as refugees to overcome immigration barriers. The result is that refugees are often stigmatised in the public mind. This presents two main challenges: governments must find ways of handling asylum applications more quickly and fairly, and politicians and people in receiving countries must avoid stereotyping all asylum seekers as "phoney" or "bogus", if not criminals.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Efforts to protect refugees are of limited value if durable solutions are not found. This is key. Voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement: these are, as you know, the three durable solutions. We must focus more on these, together with governments and our partners. I see this as the heart of my mission: not 'protection' alone, but 'protection and solutions'. For protection is not protection if there are no solutions.

Failure to provide solutions makes us all guilty of the degradation of refugees. It can also lead to a rise in crime and the threat of further conflict or instability. We must guard against this. The unacceptable alternatives when we do not provide durable solutions are more protracted refugee situations, more refugees languishing in refugee camps year after year, more refugees taking desperate measures to find safety and a better future, and more refugees being exploited by criminal networks.

To enable sustainable local integration of refugees and re-integration of returnees, we also need to find a more effective way to close the gap between emergency relief and longer-term development. Most development assistance excludes refugees. As I reported to ECOSOC in July, I see this as a big mistake. I do not believe that refugees can be dismissed as an issue peripheral to development. Africa is home to more than 5.3 million refugees and other people of concern to my Office. Their productive potential is enormous. In many African countries, I would venture to say, sustainable development will be very difficult to achieve if the productive capacities of refugees are ignored by host countries or by their own governments as they return home. This challenge arises not only in Africa. The new authorities in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia are coming to terms with the reality that several hundred thousand refugees may never return home. The quality of life these people - and their children - will have in the future will depend upon reconstruction and development activities in Serbia, not upon humanitarian aid.

Refugees are often seen as a burden, and I do not want to underestimate the humanitarian and security issues related to the presence of large refugee populations. But I would argue for a more enlightened and integrated view. Refugees are not simply the beneficiaries of humanitarian aid. They are potential contributors to development - both in their countries of asylum and upon their return home. We therefore need to rethink the relationship of refugees to development. And we need to do this thinking not far away in conferences in New York, Washington or Geneva, but on the spot, together with our donors and partners, in the places where day by day we have to remove the

obstacles. Such facile statements as "development is long-term" and "humanitarian assistance is short-term" are not useful. They simply miss the point. The search for durable solutions should begin at the outset of every humanitarian emergency.

I would like to repeat the call that I made at the Least Developed Countries Conference in Brussels in May. Donors should allocate or "earmark" a modest, at least proportional, share of development assistance funding for the inter-related issues of refugees, internally displaced people and affected local populations.

Yet another challenge for UNHCR is to find ways of promoting co-existence and reconciliation in divided communities. Last year UNHCR launched an initiative called "Imagine Co-existence", with pilot projects in Bosnia and Rwanda. These projects are candles in the dark of xenophobia. I will be working closely with Mrs Ogata in her capacity as Co-Chair of the International Commission on Human Security to follow up on these projects.

These are ongoing challenges that were mentioned last year. But the world is changing fast, and UNHCR has to be able to adapt. The recent terrorist attacks have already unleashed a wave of discriminatory assaults and provocations on people of Muslim origin in a number of countries. Xenophobia and intolerance, which is already present in so many societies, may escalate and lead to further discrimination against refugees, asylum seekers and minority groups across the world. We need to battle against xenophobia and be prepared for the formidable protection challenges that lie ahead.

Organisational management

Ladies and gentlemen,

UNHCR now finds itself operating in a crowded space, with diverse actors and limited funds. Clearly, we cannot continue to think of "business as usual". We need to re-examine the way in which we carry out our mandate to ensure the protection of refugees and durable solutions.

During my first nine months in office I have taken a number of measures to sharpen the focus of the organisation and to strengthen our capacity to meet tomorrow's challenges. This has involved new appointments, changes to our organisational structure and new policy directives.

I would like to pay tribute to the former Deputy High Commissioner, Rick Barton. He has been replaced by Mary Ann Wyrsch, who joined us in April, and whose wide-ranging management experience I warmly welcome. I would, of course, also like to pay tribute to the Assistant High Commissioner, Soren Jessen-Petersen, who is well known to all of you and who will be leaving us in this month after a long and distinguished career with the organisation. When I first arrived, he advised me that something would have to be done about the geographical balance in the Executive Office. He pointed out that there were now two of us from northern Europe, and he suggested that I look for another Assistant High Commissioner. I am sure you will join me in wishing him all the best in his future endeavours. In his place, I am pleased to welcome Kamel Morjane, who was with UNHCR for almost 20 years and who was

until recently the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I have created a core top management team - a "seamless Troika" - composed of the High Commissioner, Deputy High Commissioner and Assistant High Commissioner. Under the new structure, the Director of the Department of International Protection continues to report directly to the High Commissioner.

It is important to stress that the role of the Deputy High Commissioner has been significantly strengthened. I have created a new management structure in which all internal resource management issues are channelled through the Deputy High Commissioner and all operational management issues are channelled through the Assistant High Commissioner. The Deputy High Commissioner will be responsible for tightening up our systems for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating our programmes. It is clear that in our strategic planning, we need to focus less on inputs and more on performance, systematically evaluating our activities and following this up with appropriate corrective action.

I have revitalised the senior management with a number of new appointments including new leadership in the Department of Resource Management, the Department of Operational Support, the regional bureaux for the Americas, Asia and CASWANAME, the Inspector-General's office and in other crucial areas such as the Human Resources Service. Through all these changes, I have been able to not only introduce new talent into the organisation, but also to ensure a greatly improved gender balance within the organisation's senior management as well as geographical diversity. Rotation is good after some years, not only in the field but also with directors.

I have also taken measures to strengthen our internal investigation and oversight mechanisms. I am particularly concerned about allegations of corruption linked to resettlement in our Nairobi office. A comprehensive reform plan is now being implemented in Kenya and efforts will be made to ensure that the lessons learnt from this operation are applied globally. I am determined to do everything possible to minimise such abuse and to ensure that resettlement remains a key protection tool.

When I took up my appointment, a 20 per cent budget freeze had been imposed on all our operations across the board. This was because donors had made it clear that the budget of US$ 955 million - which had been approved by the Executive Committee only three months before - was not fundable. Moreover, UNHCR was regarded by some as being unfocused and without a clear sense of mission. Since then, we have had the "Actions 1, 2 & 3" exercise. Under this process, we reduced our 2001 budget by roughly 10%, while the number of staff posts were reduced by 16%.

Action 1, which has now been completed, entailed defining UNHCR's core activities. This proved useful in helping to define UNHCR's strategic direction. Donor reactions, however, varied. Everyone was pleased that we carried out this exercise. But while some donors had strongly urged the Office to re-prioritise its activities and to scale back or withdraw from some sectors, others - and sometimes even the same donors - were reluctant to see this happen when concrete proposals were put on the table. The call for a

more focused UNHCR was unanimous. But there was less unanimity on how this should be achieved.

A contentious issue was that of defining UNHCR's role vis a vis internally displaced persons. UNHCR inevitably has an important role to play in situations where the same root causes give rise to both internal displacement and movement of refugees across borders, or where internally displaced people live side by side with refugees or returnees. Indeed, almost a third of the people currently of concern to UNHCR are internally displaced. I am willing to continue programmes to support the internally displaced and to take on new ones where there is a need. However, programmes to assist the internally displaced should be contingent upon additional funding being made available by donors. Against this background, in September I issued new Operational Guidelines clarifying criteria for UNHCR's involvement with internally displaced persons. Let me stress that we will continue to work with internally displaced persons when they are found in the situations I have described.

Action 2 entailed a thorough review of our operations and internal structure, setting priorities on the basis of Action 1. It also entailed taking immediate steps to manage with fewer resources, through greater austerity and efficiency. The revised needs for 2001 (including Supplementary Programmes and the UN Regular Budget) now stands at US$ 882 million (excluding the Afghanistan emergency operation), and I have proposed a budget of US$ 828 million for 2002. Our efforts to ensure greater efficiency are illustrated by the fact that there has been a significant reduction in our staffing level while there has been no real change in the number of people of concern to the Office. Also, while most of the savings were made in the field rather than at Headquarters, I would like to draw your attention to the fact that between 1995 and 2000, there was a radical reduction in Headquarters expenditure by 34%. I am convinced, therefore, that we are already close to reaching our optimum size at Headquarters.

One of the results of this prioritisation exercise was a greater appreciation of the importance of effective partnerships in fulfilling UNHCR's protection mandate and achieving durable solutions. Partnership is key for us. At the same time, it was clear that we could not simply cut activities where other actors were not willing to take on new responsibilities.

While the Action 2 planning phase is over, implementation continues. This involves the closure of 11 country offices and a reduction of our staff by 16% (760 posts). A total of 219 staff were recently reassigned under an Accelerated Postings Procedure. I am fully aware that the reduction in staff posts has created a great deal of uncertainty and anxiety for many colleagues and their families. To minimise the impact and limit the negative effects of what is clearly a painful undertaking, we have put in place a number of measures including Early Retirement and Voluntary Separation Programmes. Throughout this exercise we have benefited from the constructive engagement of the Staff Council.

The question now is: did we make sufficient savings? If one does a historical comparison of numbers of people of concern to UNHCR versus budget, the answer is clearly Yes. The current working budget amounts to less than US$ 40 per year for each person of concern to UNHCR. This is considerably lower than most previous years. I consider this budget to be the absolute minimum. There

are already important needs that cannot be met with this budget. If any governments feel that UNHCR can effectively operate with less, I would like them to explain how.

Action 3 is an ongoing process. This involves reviewing fundraising in the broadest sense. I recognise that burden-sharing should be seen not only in terms of cash contributions, and I appreciate very much the efforts of countries hosting large refugee populations and countries of resettlement, but clearly these efforts do not negate the need for an adequately equipped UNHCR. I have already conveyed to donors the importance of considering a minimum level of contributions to UNHCR, commensurate with the Office's role as a multilateral organisation with a global mandate to ensure the international protection of refugees. In this context, I have suggested an amount of one dollar or one Euro per citizen as an objective to be reached over a number of years. At the same time, I hope that our most generous donors - who already exceed this amount - will continue to fund us at the current levels.

I have also set up a number of initiatives to diversify UNHCR's base of support. This has included the upgrading and professionalisation of our private sector fundraising efforts, the appointment of a Special Representative to the members of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and the League of Arab States, and an intensive dialogue on partnership with the European Union and European Commission. I regret very much that we still do not see the representative of the EU Presidency, Ambassador Noirfalisse, and the representative of the European Commission, Ambassador Trojan, sitting next to each other in this meeting. I consider this, after the Treaty of Amsterdam and the Tampere proposals, somewhat painful.

I am aware that donors often limit their contributions to UNHCR because of complaints about the quality of our programmes. Let me say a few words on this as I take this very seriously. I recognise that in some cases we can improve our performance with the same money. I am determined, together with the Deputy High Commissioner and the incoming Assistant High Commissioner, to pursue this. But in other cases we can only do so with additional resources. We need your help. We must find better mechanisms to avoid the chronic budget shortfalls and under-funding that we have experienced recently. Such shortfalls both impact negatively on quality and performance and - in vicious circle - they further weaken UNHCR's ability to mobilise resources.

Concerning the budget for 2001, I would like to ask donors who have expressed their intention to provide funds in the last quarter to do so generously and in a timely manner. We have yet to receive over US$ 100 million already indicated, and even then we will still have a shortfall of about US$ 50 million. I welcome the new contributions for the Afghan emergency operation, but these should not be at the expense of programmes in other parts of the world, many of which have already been scaled back.

For 2002, the "soft commitments" that we have received so far provide only partial reassurance that the proposed budget will be fully funded. I am grateful to donors who have already come forward, but I would welcome further commitments. I hope that no donors will diminish their level of funding in comparison with 2000 and 2001. On the contrary, I hope that many will increase their contributions to come nearer to the level of one dollar or one Euro per citizen.

Global governance of refugees

Ladies and gentlemen,

Refugees and asylum seekers have been in the international media spotlight a great deal in recent weeks - in the Balkans, at the Sangatte reception centre in France, on the Norwegian freighter in the South Pacific, and now the crisis in Afghanistan. Each of these have illustrated the severity of the refugee problem. Each has also illustrated the need for UNHCR to adapt to a changing international political environment; an environment that - to be frank - is not changing to the good.

We face many threats. These include: restrictive interpretation of the 1951 Convention, the deteriorating quality of asylum, the high costs and burdens of hosting refugees - especially in protracted refugee situations with no solutions in sight - and the perceived abuse of asylum systems.

Against this backdrop, the Global Consultations on International Protection were launched last year. The purpose of this process, on the one hand, is to seek to promote the full and effective implementation of the 1951 Convention, and on the other, to develop complementary new approaches, tools and standards to ensure the availability of international protection and durable solutions.

The Ministerial Meeting in December will be the first ever meeting of States Parties to the 1951 Convention and will be a real milestone. The level of interest amongst States has been so high that we have had to make it a two day meeting, rather than one day as initially planned. A draft Declaration has been drawn up, which - although not binding - will send a powerful message.

The Global Consultations are providing a unique opportunity for an open, frank and constructive dialogue with governments, NGOs, refugee experts and refugees themselves and will help to shape an Agenda for Protection for the coming years. There have already been good discussions on concrete policy and operational problems, such as the separation of armed elements, registration of refugees and mechanisms of burden and responsibility sharing. New standard setting, operational guidelines and policy approaches are expected outcomes of this process. Together, they will provide a guiding road map for UNHCR, States, NGOs and other protection partners, setting out shared strategic goals and recommending key actions for the years ahead.

The question that arises, is whether or not UNHCR - as it stands today in legal and formal terms, as it is positioned within the UN family, and as it is currently funded - will be able to meet the challenges of responding to the refugee situations of tomorrow. There are signals that UNHCR is not adequately positioned as a multilateral institution to address the problems we are required to handle under our mandate. To address these long-term questions, I have launched the "UNHCR 2004" process. The aim of this is to develop a concept of how UNHCR could be positioned better to carry out its mandate. This should be developed in time for 1 January 2004, when our current mandate comes up for renewal. In carrying out this exercise, I will take into account the outcomes of the three tracks of the Global Consultations.

Finally, a few words about the subject that is uppermost in most people's minds at the moment: the fight against international terrorism. As the Secretary-General has stated, no people, no region and no religion should be condemned because of the unspeakable acts of a few individuals. We must all guard against a rising tide of xenophobia and intolerance. Refugees and asylum seekers are already the objects of considerable mistrust and hostility in many countries, and they are particularly vulnerable in the current climate. We should beware of those politicians who claim to pursue the public cause but simply exploit racial instincts. Fighting against xenophobia must be at a top priority for us all.

Afghans are particularly vulnerable. Even before the barbaric acts of 11 September, Afghans constituted the largest refugee population in the world, with some four million spread out between Iran, Pakistan and a multitude of other countries across the world. A war on terrorism should not become a war on Afghans. Neither should it become a war on Islam.

Each of the solutions for refugee problems - voluntary repatriation, local integration and resettlement - have one thing in common: each is only attainable when there is respect. Respect for refugees going home; respect for refugees who can be instrumental in local development; respect for the refugees who come from far away and who can enrich our societies. Let us therefore talk about respect. A respect which goes beyond tolerance. Respect for people of every ethnic, religious, social and cultural background.

Everyone shares in the responsibility of ensuring respect for the individual dignity and worth of each and every refugee. Politicians and the media have a special charge to keep in combating racism, xenophobia and intolerance, and in resisting the temptation to scapegoat refugees. Let us therefore work together to create a culture of respect. The people who are of concern to UNHCR deserve it.

Thank you.

ANNEX III

Chairman's Summing up of the General Debate

(Tuesday, 3 October 2001)

After a half a century of concerted effort by the international community to address the problems associated with refugees and displaced persons, the High Commissioner has indeed questioned and challenged our assumptions about the way forward. During our discussion over the past two and a half days we have tried to take up this challenge and give some answers to the dilemmas UNHCR is faced with. Delegations have provided fresh insights and stimulated broader thinking, enabling us to look at refugees from different perspectives, many of them innovative.

In the face of major problems - the resurgence of global terrorism and a resulting heightened emergency in Afghanistan, on-going refugee situations, budget shortfalls - it is clear that delegations have responded very positively to the High Commissioner's new approaches and efforts to define a clear vision for the future of the Office. These are embodied in such initiatives as Actions 1, 2 and 3, the on-going Global Consultations, and the "UNHCR 2004" process.

Delegations have expressed support for identifying the core activities of UNHCR's work, results-based budgeting, the need for more stable, predictable and adequate funding and efforts to broaden the donor base. Several speakers recognized the usefulness of the High Commissioner's call for "soft commitments" by already indicating levels of contributions for the coming year. Statements that some cash-donors are opening new development-oriented funding windows are also welcome. At the same time many cautioned against implementation of belt tightening measures that compromise vital services to refugees. Others expressed concern that classifying some measures as non-core activities may have a negative impact on long-term solutions.

Delegations reiterated support for the Global Consultations on International Protection and the role of the 1951 Convention as the cornerstone of the international protection regime. Indeed several speakers urged those who have not yet done so to accede as soon as possible to the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol. Strong support was also voiced for the upcoming Ministerial Meeting of the Global Consultations and the Declaration that will result from this process. I welcome the announcement that many Governments will participate at a high level in this important meeting. Many delegations also indicated that they looked forward to the outcome of the Global Consultations process, in particular the early formulation of an Agenda for Protection, which may serve as a useful roadmap for the strengthening of the international protection regime.

The expressions of commitment to work with the High Commissioner as partners -- Member States, sister agencies, regional, intergovernmental, and other organizations -- in the search for durable solutions is another positive message. I might add here that it has been gratifying to see the extent of interaction between UNHCR and NGOs in the three days of meetings during the pre-ExCom session

and the various panels that have met during the week. The discussions which have taken place have been thoughtful and enlightening; they bode well for future cooperation. We have seen that such collaborative, operational partnerships can be vehicles for capacity-building and utilize local knowledge and connections in responding to some of the more challenging issues that confront UNHCR.

In addition to support for these ongoing activities, the need for UNHCR to look to the future was also recognized through the support voiced for the "UNHCR 2004" process. As the High Commissioner pointed out, five decades after the establishment of his Office, UNHCR must adapt to the realities of a constantly changing political environment. It must conceptualize how to position itself more effectively to carry out its mandate within a global governance framework to address the refugee challenges of tomorrow.

There were also a number of other themes touched upon during the course of our General Debate. In condemning the tragic events of 11 September and the resurgence of global terrorism, delegations called for cooperation in fighting this scourge. At the same time the High Commissioner's warnings to guard against the dangers of xenophobia and intolerance were welcomed. Strong support was expressed for the efforts of UNHCR to deal with the situation in Afghanistan, while at the same time not ignoring other refugee situations which continue to need our attention.

Staff safety and security, as well as the physical protection of refugees, has been highlighted as a key issue. Some delegations also stressed the need to address the presence of combatants in the midst of refugee populations. This Committee has indicated its desire to be more aware of situations in the field under which humanitarian staff operate and where refugees live. Indeed, as I said in my opening statement, we must remain cognizant of the realities on the ground.

There were many expressions of concern about maintaining the institution of asylum and fair asylum procedures, the link between refugee issues and migration and the difficulties of dealing with mixed-migration flows. In responding to refugee flows delegations noted the importance of comprehensive approaches that recognize the burdens borne by host countries. In addition, many speakers called for the strengthening of emergency response mechanisms; the need for comprehensive approaches to address root causes; the link between humanitarian assistance and development; the benefit of including refugee issues in development planning; the importance of national capacity-building; the need to promote international solidarity and responsibility or burden-sharing; and the benefits of regional and sub-regional cooperation, as exemplified by the statements from the EU Presidency, the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the Organization of African Unity and the Southern African Development Community, amongst others, which could inspire such cooperation in other areas.

I was particularly gratified to hear several delegations and many of our panellists echo a theme that both the High Commissioner and I

addressed in our opening presentations regarding how to involve refugees directly in the search for durable solutions, in particular sustainable repatriation or integration. Many speakers commented on the importance of restoring dignity to refugees, recognizing their potential for contributions to their communities, and showing them the respect that they deserve. If we can carry these attitudes out of this meeting and into the field, we will have made a significant step forward in responding to the challenges of the future. If we can do this, it will bring us one step closer to what one delegation described as the deeper meaning of the Durban Conference -- the need to find "a way to overcome divisions of culture, civilization, even of religion, so that we can create an inclusive family of humankind".